



THE MAID OF REDENFAYN



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STROMBOLD.

The Maid of Redenfayn

AN ALLEGORY

OF

TWO WORLDS

IN THREE BOOKS:

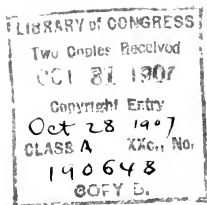
- I. THE BOOK OF LOVES AND DREAMS
- II. THE BOOK OF AMBITION AND GRIEF
- III. THE BOOK OF REPENTANCE AND JOYS

ALL IN ONE VOLUME

GAUT-OGDEN COMPANY
Knoxville, Tenn.

1907

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TO
YNDAFRENE,
"MAID OF HIS EDEN DAYS,"
THIS POEM OF HIS YOUTH,
RETOUCHED IN HIS OLD AGE,
IS
DEDICATED
BY HER HUSBAND,
THE SCRIBE.

1

TWO-FOLD IS LIFE,
BOTH MANIFEST AND MYSTERY,
WHAT IS, WHAT SEEMS,
REAL AND IDEAL,
WAKING AND DREAMS:
BOTH RHAPSODY AND HISTORY.



TWO-FOLD IS LIFE,
BOTH HAPPINESS AND MISERY,
SUNSHINE AND CLOUDS,
HOPE AND DESPAIR,
NUPTIALS AND SHROUDS,
THE FIXED AND THE RESCISSORY

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A decorative border of leaves and flowers surrounds the text.

PART I.

The Book of Loves and Dreams.

Of every virtue Love's the soul,
Of justice, truth and holiness;
Of every virtue Love's the whole,—
Of charity and lowliness:
Her natal home Jehovah's breast,
Where'er she lives is Paradise:
Deprived of this all-hallowing guest
E'en Heaven were Hell, and virtue vice.

CHAPTER I.

A Dream of Paradise.

PROEM.

The Scribe falls into a revery, and sees and hears wonderful things in what seems a Paradise. He hears an invocation to Love; meets Yndafrene, "maid of his Eden days"; beholds the Temple of Truth, the Fane of Fame, the Dome of Doom, and the Poet's Souvenir; hears the mystical music and ode to Omnummo; reads the words on the allegorical Myrtle Leaves, a rough translation of which he makes; and describes, as best he can, all he saw and heard and did.

CANTO 1.

The Scribe's Musings.

Beside a Northern lake, where tower and hall
And college bell old Hobart's classic grounds
Proclaimed, alone the Scribe did love to stroll,
And ponder on the legends, weird and old,
Of warring men, dark deeds and visions strange,
Of ghosts all black, and headless men on steeds,
Careering o'er the lake on moonless nights,
When howling storms from clouds tumultuous
Upon its agitated form did hurl,
Like demons mad, their awful thunder-bombs;—
Of Indian lover, Agayenteh true,
Who for love's sake beneath its waves did plunge
And changed was to a log, which upright floats
From shore to shore as his dear Echo calls,

And groans with grief for her whene'er she calls;—
Of mighty kings, stronger than Hercules,
Braver than Cæsar or Leonidas,
Battling for glory with their armored hosts;—
Of queens fairer than light, sweeter than flowers,
With eyes like Vesper's, and with smiles like May's;—
A panorama actual and sublime,
Like moving pictures on a canvass vast,
All history and hypothesis, all myths,
Fables, fictions and dreams of fairy-land;
But chiefly such as pictured forth like life
Bright scenes of love, and deeds of chivalry,
Right ever victor, wrong ever o'erthrown.

A sunny morn it was, and summer time,
This lake with legends, and this classic shore:
Huge rocks were piled around, all cool with dew



The Lake with Legends.

And mantled well with vines; bright streams of grass
Meandered through the clefts; and from each niche
Peeped tiny flowers,—sweet works of fairy art.

Beneath the trees' calm shade a brooklet crept,
There kissing lilies' cheeks 'mid whisperings,
And humming here its pebbly babes to sleep,
With liquid lullabies. So gently o'er
The leaves the soft breeze stepped, they scarcely moved.
Among the moss-clad boughs no sound was heard
Save cricket chirps and bee-winged minstrelsy.
Where downward reached an elm its long, crook'd arms
To lave their leafy tips in waters cool,
Upon a mound of moss, did sit the Scribe,
Watching two mated birds build up their nest,
With joyous prattlings and most tender looks,
While through his mind slow floated dreamy thoughts
Of Yndafrene, maid of his Eden days.
Over his soul's calm sea brooded supreme
An ecstasy of bliss, all halcyon-like.
Into his ears soft murmuring music crept,
Till all the world seemed nought but melody.
Then did he hear, or seem to hear, or feel,—
For 'twas a feeling rather than a sound,—
These words, or what indeed did seem these words:

CANTO 2.

Invocation to Love.

Smile, all ye Angels; smile, ye maids of earth;
Smile, all ye sons of men; smile, all that live;
Grow bright, ye skies; bend down your eyes, sweet stars;
Come, all ye holy powers and elements
Of Heaven and earth, of sea and land and sky;
And fill this soul with your most potent charm,
That charm divine, Jehovah's second Self,
Of virtues, powers and elements first born,
Celestial Love! the light of Paradise,
And source divine of all felicity.
Oh, through this tongue speak ye to all the world,
And swell your everlasting syllables
Unto the sons of men forevermore,—

Till all your words shall hear, and own your sway.
Oh, for thy voice, thou organ of the sky,
Oh, for thy mind, thou great Archangel bard,
That I the praise of Love might thunder forth,
In symphonies so trebly ravishing
That all the planets, stars and suns of space,
The song would learn, and thus her excellence
Forever chime unto the sons of men.

Thou bond of peace, thou soul of ecstasy,
Thrice-hallowed Love, in whom the Three are One!
Thou spotless Queen of God's own Kingdom-home,
Thy name we bless, and bow in homage low,
Hoping thy smile to win, without the which
Dark is the earth and Heaven hid away.
With thee all men are equal, poor and rich;
Thy holy eyes see neither wealth nor fame,
But hearts alone, and every heart's alike.
Ah, lost was Paradise, and Adam's sin
Upon his sons fell hard; but thou didst stay,
Sweet One, and found again is Paradise
Where thou dost reign. Our thanks how can we show,
Thy praise how sing? Insolvent mortals we,
And gratitude is all that we can pay —
Is all that we can pay: how seldom paid.
Oh, God, how good our thankless souls to spare!

At once the flower and fruit of Holiness,
Almighty Love, thou bind'st the universe,
The potent keystone of its boundless dome,
'Neath which, 'mong all the suns and stars of space,
Exist one Faith, one Country, and one God:
That God our Father, all the world His Home;
Hence all men brothers, Love their only law.
Our sun, its planets and their satellites,
Are but as atoms in the realms of space:
Then how incomprehensibly minute
This earth: upon a boundless sea a mite,
Compared with space a speck invisible

Of finest dust afloat among the suns:
Then how infinitesimal is man!

Though young in time's comparison, the earth
For many million centuries has lived;
And yet but as an hour her age beside
Our sun's, and its but a mere tick of time
Beside th' antiquity of th' universe.
How utter then the nothingness of man!
So humble be we as the tiniest worm;
In our brief day do all the good we can,
Love God and man and every living thing,
For never here this life we'll live again.

Love to our race is a necessity:
We would not be had Love herself not been;
Father and mother hath she been to us;
In her blessed realm is El Dorado found,
Within whose midst blooms bright the Tree of Life,
From whose roots' sap doth flow the fount of youth.
Beneath her reign no sword is ever drawn,
No war drum beats, nor deadly powder burns;
But far and high peace floats her milk-white flag.
The devil's gospel of eternal hate
Before the smile of love will yet go down:
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

Looking through history's mighty telescope,
Many the empires seen builded by force
Upon this earth, in ages long since passed,—
Whereof but myths and ruins now remain
Faintly to show where and whereof they were.
Only one kingdom seen builded by love;
And grown it has for near two thousand years,
And still does grow and spread and gather strength,
Till every land, and clime, and tribe, and tongue,
In all the world doth feel its blessed sway.

Egypt and Persia, Rome and Macedon,
Assyria, Gaul, Carthage and Tartary,

All built on force have fallen to decay;
Sesostris, Alexander, Genghis Khan,
Cæsar, great Hannibal, and Tamerlane,
Mere synonyms of bloody conquerors,—
No one the better that they ever lived.
But Christendom, founded on holy love,
With peace, not war, for its chief corner stone,
Survives and prospers; Jesus its great head,
The name most honored 'mong the sons of men,
Who most has done to make earth Paradise,
Truth, love and peace His only instruments.

Love is the key that opens every heart:
There is no lock it will not fit, no bolt
It will not turn, no door it cannot ope,
No knot untie, no wall it cannot climb,
No way it cannot find, no thing not do.
Love is the ichor once in human hearts
That makes eternal their devotedness.
Love is the very sunlight of the soul:
She lights in every heart the lamp of joy.
True love to angels does transfigure men,
And unto men transfigures human beasts.
Among all creatures irresistible,
She betters all whose hearts her smile doth touch.

True love's a plant that buds and blossoms here,
But bears sweet fruit of bliss in Paradise.
If love the earth should leave—oh, woe the day!
All men to beasts would turn, and beasts to fiends,
And earth would be as Hell—all ruled by hate,
No seed would sprout, egg hatch, or germ expand;
No young be born, no new life anywhere,
(For life no parent has but Love alone;)
The earth itself, so perfect and so fair,
Would into space dissolve, and nought remain
But gases foul, and all invisible;
For Love it is that holds its parts in one,
And gives it form and motion, life and force.

Then, Love, be thou our very second self,
Root of each thought, of every wish the fount,
Coiner of all our words, prompter of acts.
Who loving lives, lives loved and dies beloved,
And loving hearts his memory will embalm
On earth, while saints in Heaven his gentle soul
With joy will greet and welcome with a kiss.
Who hating lives lives hated, hated dies;
His grave quick hid by foulest weeds and briars,
The haunt of snakes and skunks, lizards and toads;
His wasp-like soul, forbid to enter Heaven,
Tossed to and from by hostile winds and waves,
Becomes a devil's imp, or midnight fiend.

Philosophy, when young and fancy free,
A stone long sought with touch so magical
That metals base to purest gold would turn.
In vain the search! But thy soft touch, oh Love,
Each thought and passion base will purify,
And sin's vile dross turn to celestial gold.
Vain, alchemy! and Paracelsus vain!
Love is the alkahest, and every stone
Of hate beneath her magic touch dissolves.
Her downy wings brush off the dust of care,
Her balmy tears make soft and sound the heart,
Her smiles awaken joy when dead with grief,
And light again the lamp of hope snuffed out
By the black wings of raven-eyed despair.

When Love doth smile bright grows the earth again,
Our hearts revive, and woe doth lose her prey.
Yes, Love's the salt of life that keeps it sweet,
And Love's the sun of life that keeps it bright.
Love knows not time, hence Heaven's eternity;
In her fair courts the time-fiend dares not come,
For Love his scythe hath dulled, and broke his glass.
Eternal youth there weds eternal bliss,
That bride of brides; her dower eternal peace:
For Love is Heaven, and Love's eternity.

How shall we give her thanks? her praise how sing?
Insolvent mortals we, and gratitude
Is all that we can pay: how seldom paid!
O God! how good our thankless souls to spare!

CANTO 3.

Yndafrene.

And when the words he ceased to hear, or feel,
Appeared a boat far out upon the lake,—
(That then did seem the starry sky down-turned,)
A boat like a canoe of silver bark—
A shining crescent on a crystal sea;
And in it sailed a being bright and fair,
As though Astarte came to earth again.
Without or sail or oar, wind, wave or tide,
That shining boat upon that shining lake
Sped towards the Scribe, and he by impulse moved
Reached forth his hand unto the lady fair—
'Twas Yndafrene, maid of his Eden days!
A jasmine wreath wound through her dark-brown hair,
Nor other ornament. Pale intellect
Sat throned in dignity upon her brow,
And fair tranquility encompassed her.
E'en like a bride she seemed in modesty.
Then sat they down, on what, or where, or when,
He heeded not, for she was all in all.
Of poetry and flowers long they talked,
For these were things she most admired and loved.
Then pictured he the Eden-land of love,
Its cloudless summer days and shady groves,
Its stars, and moonlight walks beside the sea.
Oft did she sigh, and smile, and raise her eyes,
But never spake, save what her sweet face said.
Upon the Scribe love laid her potent spell,
And with her talisman did hold him firm.

Love is a yearning of the tender soul,
A yearning of the heart, e'en from its core,
A yearning of the eyes in pensive gaze,
A yearning of the ears with head aside,—
A yearning eager, ardent, deep and strong,
Of heart and soul and mind and every sense;—
For what? For any sound or sight, or touch,
Of one who's all in all. Her finger tip
Doth thrill him through and through; her slightest glance



Yndafrene beside the Lake.

His heart doth pierce and make it wildly beat
With palpitations, till grow weak his limbs;
Her smile with ecstasies his soul doth flood,
And lift him to the skies. But oh, her kiss,
From lips so rosy red and honey sweet,
Her kiss, like an electric shock of joy,
Pulsates delicious rapture through his frame
From inmost center to circumference,
Tingling along each vein and nerve and hair,
Until this world has gone, and — Heaven has come.

What is of love the wish and will and way?
It is with gentle wishes, sweet desires,
And fondest prayers, fancy the architect,
Within some lovely vale, by flowers and vines
Embowered, to build a home most beautiful;
Bright birds and gentle creatures dwelling 'round;
A waterfall and rivulet near by.
And in this home, its chiefest occupant,
Fairest of all fair maidens, eyes like stars
Of loveliness, cheeks fair as skies of May,
Lips like the red red rose, and breath as sweet,
Her smile pure bliss, her voice all melody,
He her companion and sole minister;—
Living by day always with her in sight,
Sleeping by night always within her arms;
Dreaming of her, and of no other thing;
Her smile his sunshine, and her kiss his Heaven;
Life one unending round of ecstasies,
And she sole source and center of delight.
This, this is love, and this, felicity.
Who has not felt its thrills knows nought of Heaven
Nor much of earth: the fairest sweetest page
In his sad history is all a blank.
So mused the Scribe in dreaming revery.

CANTO 4.

The Temple of Truth.

He raised his eyes, and lo, a temple grand
Loomed in the azure sky: celestial sight!
Pierced through the air a thousand glittering spires;
A golden dome glowed dazzling in their midst;
Hundreds of columns, made of every gem,
Rose like straight rainbows 'neath the architraves;
And on their tops were gorgeous capitals
Of Eden flowers in jewelled vases grown.
On every side the trees in sisterhood

Reared high their slender cones of greenery,
And 'mong the shrubs wound walks of velvet grass.
With jets of fragrant spray a hundred founts
Did cool the air, making soft melodies
Among the trees, and on their waving leaves
Strewed iris tints profuse. Light-hearted birds
Of every note sweet warbled every where,
And gentle beasts between the fountains played.
Like tiny boquets of most beauteous flowers
Resplendent butterflies danced o'er the lawn,
Some waltzing high above the highest trees.
About the streams and founts were dragon-flies
Of purple, gold and green, with knowing looks.
Through the bright waters 'neath the lilies' leaves
Flashed playful fish with iridescent tints;
And like bright clustered gems gay humming birds
As quick as sight shot gaily to and fro.
Within this temple all was loveliness:
Proportion, color and variety,
In such exquisite symmetry combined,
No single part, compared with all the rest,
One badge of super-excellence disclosed,
Or held his gaze, however marvellous;—
But as the honey-bird from flower to flower,
Flits, drinking sweets from all, preferring none,
So his eyes to and fro impartially.
A poet's dream it stood before his eyes,—
A poet's dream of youth and fairyland,
Its pictured walls, and heaven-reaching dome;
Like gossamer its tissue draperies,
With scenes dramatic woven in their web;
Its floors mosaic bright with landscape views
Of summer's most resplendent scenery.
All through and through in endless maze were aisles
Meandering 'midst columns, pedestals,
And statues grand; while many winding stairs
Of shining stone, with flowers and vines festooned,
Rose up mysteriously, till hid from sight

By arches bright and huge as heaven's bow.
What seemed its center, but its vestibule
Perchance, an organ held, built like a fane,
A dream of music done in sculptured stone,—
Pure poetry in porphyry petrified,
Reflected brightly in the mirrored walls.

The Scribe did wonder what, and whence and why.
"The Hall of Truth," a gentle voice replied.
He turned, and lo! an angel at his side,—
And yet, somehow, the face and voice were *hers*,
Were Yndafrene's, maid of his Eden days.

CANTO 5.

The Fane of Fame.

Upreared aloft within this Hall of Truth,
All radiant shone a gorgeous monument,
Magnificent in all its magnitudes:
Hexagonal, and every side adorned
With names in gold most beautifully writ:
Some here and there with glittering diamonds set,
Resplendent some on lofty columns shone,
Others on obelisks of rarest stone,
While not a few on grand medallions glowed.
Divining what the Scribe did wish to know,
"The Fane of Fame this is," replied the guide.
"Recorded here on high the brightest names
To angels known. Few heroes, kings or queens,
Few statesmen, fewer priests and generals.
Those who mankind have blessed, who most have done
To banish tears and woe, disease and want,
Who in the hearts of men have waked most joys,
Whose words have been to spirits bruised a balm;
Who by inventions or discoveries,
To human happiness have added most,
Who some good thing did do the world to bless,
While others got the profit and the fame.

No other names appear enjewelled here;
But some are here to men on earth unknown,
And some to blackest infamy there doomed
Because of human ignorance or vice.

The brightest name of all the sons of men
Is His, in manger born at Bethlehem;
Who spent in poverty a life of love,
And died condemned 'tween thieves on Calvary;—
Name most adored of all of woman born,
Who preached and practiced God's great law of love,
That holy gospel of fraternity;—
Name unto which should humbly bow all knees,
All tongues confession make,—adoring Him,
Jesus the Christ, in truth the Son of God.
His fame 'twere sacrilege to blazon here,
Since high in Heaven, to spell His holy name,
Shine bright His bloody Cross and Crown of Thorns."

CANTO 6.

The Dome of Doom.

"The names of earth's most famous conquerors,
Who empires overthrew, nations destroyed,
Cities consumed in conflagrations dire,
Fields covered thick with bones of butchered men,
Lands happy once made black with widows' weeds,
And sorrowful with starving orphans' wails—
Where are their mighty names?" inquired the Scribe.
"Yon Dome of Doom their branded names contains."
Answered the guide, unto a canyon deep
And dark pointing her hand,—(a canyon like
That noisome pit below Jerusalem,
Tophet the vile, and black Gehenna called,)—
Wherein a dome appeared of huge black rocks,
Ill-shaped, begrimed, rough and irregular,
Like some strong prison-house for felons vile,
'Mid garbage heaps, and stagnant pools of filth.

No door nor window in its sides or roof
Access or light gave to this Dome of Doom,
A dismal, crooked passage underground
Its only opening; a lambent flame,
An *ignis fatuus* oozing from the filth,
Its only light. There awful silence reigned,
But for hyenas' howls and ravens' croaks.
Some grievous curse, some woful infamy,
Seemed hanging 'round like pall invisible.



Pictures in the Dome of Doom.

The names of blackest brand appearing there
In letters backwards writ and upside down,
In Hell's high Hall of Fame exalted shine,—
The great of earth, heroes and kings and queens,
Who filled the land with ruins, blood and tears;
Statesmen who used their power the poor to grind;
Judges who, bribed, gave judgment for the wrong;

Priests who by bigotry built martyrs' fires;
Teachers by speech or print who counsel gave
That far astray in wrong led young and old,
Painting all bright the ways of wickedness,
But harsh and cheerless making truth appear.
Thus were these pictured in this Dome of Doom:
Some mighty kings, high by their necks were hung;
Some conquerors, heads down in vats of blood;
Some priests, writhing on racks themselves had made;
Some judges, by the sword of justice pierced;
Some teachers, choked by their own wicked words;
Some statesmen's hearts for demons made a home;
Some queens, by heels hung high, a roost for crows;
Some tyrants, drowned in tanks of human tears;
Some rulers, crushed beneath a nation's curse.

CANTO 7.

The Poet's Souvenir of Fame.

Again the Scribe was in the Hall of Truth,
Within the portals of the Fane of Fame,
In rapture gazing on the shining names,—
Thinking how grand to be enrolled sublime
Among those glorious monograms of fame.
Names saw he there upon the earth not known,
But in love's tears embalmed in distant orbs.
High o'er them all did blaze a star of stars,
Within these stars did shine ten crescent moons,
Within these moons a sun of burnished gold,
Within this sun stood forth three smiling saints,
Truth, Hope and Purity, with coronets,
And hair, like as a garment, to their feet.
High o'er their heads, upon their upturned hands
An angel stood, of beauty infinite,
Whose crown outshone the sun: her name was Love;
And from her face and heart a virtue went
That filled with joy each soul she looked upon.

Above her head she held a deathless name
That dazzled so the Scribe he could not read;
Nor could he tell whether the things he saw
Were nature's works, or splendid blazonry
Of angel art; nor durst inquiry make.

"A million million years and millions more
Has glowed undimmed yon gorgeous souvenir,"
The angel said, with triumph in her voice,
And adoration in her countenance.

"His name no earthly ear can ever hear,
No earthly eye can read, nor tongue can tell,
Nor mortal memory hold: his poetry
Was for the pure in heart and intellect,
In words conveyed that have in human speech
No counterparts; nor could gross hearts of earth
The thoughts of his high utterance conceive,
So sublimated they and psychical.
Some flowers a fragrance shed so subtly sweet
No skill can bottle it; some minds have thoughts
Too subtle for mere words or sentences.

This poet's home was in the central sun —"
"The central sun?" queried the Scribe, perplexed.
"Aye, the great central sun, the hub and fount.
What you, down in your little lower world
Miscal *the* sun is but the tiniest mote
When with the Universe of Worlds compared.
Your sun, with all its planets and their moons,
Around another mightier sun revolves;
This second sun, with other suns than yours,
And all their planets, moons and satellites,
Revolves around a third more mighty still,
Its parent, sovereign and chief luminary;
This third huge sun, with its dependent suns,
And all their planetary retinues,
Around a fourth more huge: thus suns and suns
With all their meteors, comets, planets, moons,
Marshallled through space to move harmonious,

Revolve, in endless and majestic tours,
Round larger suns, in numbers numberless,
Unto this central sun of all the suns,
The sire of all, hub of the universe,
At one birth born with substance, time and space,
By God made king and father of all worlds,—
The autocrat of all created things.
This sun's the birth-place of yon shining name.
In the primeval long-ago he strewed
Upon his solar home most holy thoughts,
In sweetest language robed. His words sublime
Etherialized his comrades carnal souls,
And like to angels' wings bore them to God:
They this transcendent souvenir did rear
And there in living light did write his name.

Just here the organ's dulcet psalmody
Came streaming forth in thrills electrical;
And round about in groups fair forms appeared.
Upon a simple stand of crystal stood
A being bright, a white leaf in his hand.
The organ's tones swelled most melodiously
Along the aisles, then trembling rose and sought
Each hidden niche, graved arch and deep recess,
Warbling high 'mong the domes symphoniously,—
Till all the air was rythmic harmony,
And beat each heart in happy unison.
The being bright here waved his shining leaf;
Its golden lips the organ slowly closed,
And far away its voice died gradually,
Its lingering echoes whispering low farewells.
The leaf the being read; and all that throng
Drew near. To his each face upturned, each eye
Affixed, each ear awake, greedy to hear
A poem sweet, in stanzas musical,—
A tale in memory to keep preserved,
Until one dreams upon his wedding night,—
A tale of Paradise,—of ecstasy.
Its crystal thoughts no earthly tongue can turn

Into the muddy tide of human speech;
And it were profanation to attempt.
So, though the thoughts and visions haunt his soul,
No words do come to mould them into speech.

CANTO 8.

Omnummo.

A sweet, faint note of music far away
He heard, but barely heard: louder it swelled,
And grander grew, and more melodious.
Around the world it rolled; the sky it filled;
The mountains, hills and plains, oceans and seas;
Deep down in Hell its base notes all seemed born,
The altos bird-like quavered 'mong the stars,
And all between great worlds of symphonies.
With these resounding harmonies compared,
The many million instruments devised
By man the ear to please with melody,
The many million notes by song-birds sung,
The choruses of all the world combined,
Aided by every band that ever played,
With anvils, bells and cannons in the choirs;
The heavens' thunder-booms, the howling winds
And bellowing billows joining in the score,—
Were but as insect notes in hollow logs.

Louder and yet more loud and ravishing
The melodies most multitudinous:
The earth, the moon, the planets and the stars,
The winds and waves, the mountains and the plains,
In chorus joined of harmonies divine.
All senses seemed centered in the ear.
O'er every nerve and fiber of one's frame
Poured thrilling streams of blissful melodies.
From center to circumference the soul
Was filled with ecstasies most exquisite,

Till life seemed into music all transformed,
And death so joyous life had not been missed.

But came a pause, and then discordant notes;
An awful bass rolled up from Hell to Heaven,
And seemed the very stars to terrify.
Staccatos made of awful thunder-claps
Seemed all the world to shake and paralyze.
All melodies turned into medleys harsh,
All voices hoarse, and cracked all instruments,
While gratings, janglings, jarrings, creaks and clanks,
Hissings and screeches, twangings, brays and croaks,
Discords demoniac a chorus made,
Fit for the horrid orchestras of Hell.

All out of tune were earth and sea and sky,
And awful clamors rent the universe
With crashing detonations deafening.
The Scribe's ears seemed but one, a hollow sphere
Of iron made, vast as the universe;
And on its sides, within without, did beat
Ten million hammers huge; and monstrous gongs
Did roar, and anvils ring, all numberless,
Beaten by giant hands with clubs of steel,—
While mighty cannons boomed vociferous,
Discharged by broadsides and in batteries;
And bombs by millions in the chorus joined,
Making the ear a hell of hateful howls.

And death had come, but weaker, weaker grew
These deafening discords of diabolism,
Leaving the sky and settling on the earth;
Until at last the infernal roars deep sunk
Into the ground, and all was still as death,—
One's heart-beat all the sound in all the world.

"That music typifies," the Angel said,
"The universe's awful ebb and flow
Out of Omnunmo's mouth, and back again.
Those harmonies divine we first did hear

The outflow signifies, creation's morn;
The eve and night the horrid discords mean,
When all things back again to chaos turn."
"Tell me of this: more would I know," he said.
Her head she raised, a strange light in her eyes,
Upward and outward her fair hands she spread;
Then in a solemn monotone she spake:

"Eternity's huge Hall, commensurate
With Space: above its dome is Nothingness;
Below its base is Nought; beyond its walls
There is no other where, no *ultra plus*;
Height without top, depth without bottom, width
Without bounds, and length without start or end,—
The Universe it holds and comprehends.
Within this boundless Hall Omnunmo breathes—
Eternal and omnipotent I Am,
The All-creating-all-destroying-One.
Breathing light, life, music, matter and mind.
As chaos they go forth, but Order comes—
And harmonies divine all space pervade:
Then shines the central sun, planets appear,
And all the grand machinery of the skies,—
A pageantry most splendid and sublime.

"Life next blooms forth in forms most manifold,
In plants, insects and fish, in birds and beasts,
Till lo! Omnunmo's greatest progeny,—
Man, God of Flesh, radiant and divine,
O'er all supreme, creation's master-piece!
Whereat a burst of music floods the world,
As when the morning stars together sang.
Omnunmo smiles, and angels shout for joy,—
The flower of the universe is born.

"But light and life, music, matter and mind,
He ceaseth not to breathe, and while he breathes
Suns, planets, moons, and all created things,
Live, grow and prosper in development.
But when ten hundred thousand million years

Have been recorded by the Clock of Time
Eternity's great bell high noon proclaims.
Omnunmo's breath has said to him adieu.
A sigh he heaves, and all creation quakes,—
That sigh a second of eternity.

"Begins his breath now slowly to return;
But ever grow its volume and its force,
Until all light and life, matter and mind,
Suns, planets, moons, comets and satellites,
Men, beasts and birds, fish, plants and trees,
Mountains and seas, islands and continents,
The glory, pride and pageantry of worlds,
Crushed in one undistinguishable mass,
Are drawn into the vortex of his breath,
And disappear,—all utterly absorbed,—
Till in all space is nought but Nothingness.

"But when ten hundred thousand million years
Have thus been passed, Omnunmo's breath's all back:
Again he sighs. Eternity's great bell
The midnight of creation heralds forth,
In tones so loud the universe is thrilled.
Omnunmo smiles, and light and life go forth,
Like beauteous angels, hand in hand, sublime.
Then out Omnunmo's breath begins to move,
And moves and moves, till all things are renewed,
And the ten hundred thousand million years
Are all consumed: then sounds again that bell,
And Chaos and Destruction shout for joy.
Omnunmo sighs, inward his breath doth flow —
So swings Eternity's great pendulum.

"Thus inward, outward through Omnunmo's mouth
Creation and destruction ever flow.
Begins he everything and all things ends.
The first that's last the last that's first to be,
The Alpha and Omega,—All-in-One
And One-in-All, Omnunmo is,—the Whole.
But all so slowly flows his wondrous breath

Ten million years and more science requires
The outward from the inward tide to tell,—
And even then there is no certainty:
So foolish they who anxious are to know.

"I'll give you what is called Omnunmo's Chant,
As best I can in human language phrased.

The Chant of Omnunmo.

I.

"Omnunmo I, the All-in-One.
Out with my breath have all things gone.
Omnunmo I, the All-in-One.
In with my breath will all things run.
All that exists to me will come,
And in my maw will find their tomb,
Till ended is the day of doom,
When once again in life they'll bloom.
For I my breathing will reverse
And breathe through space the Universe.
Thus worlds come in, thus worlds go forth,—
A ceaseless dying and rebirth;
My breathing out and breathing in
Eternity's complex machine.

II.

"Omnunmo I, the All-in-One.
Forth with my breath have all things gone;
All that in space floats, flies, or runs;
All planets, comets, stars, and suns;
All oceans, mountains, isles and mains;
All rivers, fountains, lakes and plains;
All that's perceived by ear or eye,
In fire or water, land or sky;
All that is tasted, thought or smelt;
All that's imagined, dreamed or felt;
All visions that the soul affect;
All insights of the intellect;
Went forth from me, from me went forth
Into the east, west, south and north.

III.

"Omnunmo I, the All-in-One.
In with my breath will all things run;
All matters in the bounds of space;

All things God's knowledge doth embrace;
From littlest mote to vastest globe;
From mightiest man to mere microbe;
All creatures of sea, land or sky;
From condor great to tiniest fly;
From hugest whale to parasite;
From mammoth to minutest mite:
All grasses, flowers, shrubs, vines and trees;
All hates, loves, joys and miseries;
In with my breathing all will come,
And in my stomach make their home.

IV.

"Omnunmo I, the All-in-One.
Out with my breath will all things run;
From magnitude to nothingness;
From littlest unto measureless;
From grandest mind to brainless worm,
That nought can think but eat and squirm;
All that lifts man above a clod,
And proves him kinsman unto God;
All that gives pleasure to the soul,
And Heaven makes man's grandest goal;
All that breeds love, all that makes strife;
All matter, mind; all force and life;
Go forth from me, from me go forth,
Into the east, west, south and north.

V.

"Omnunmo I, the All-in-One.
The Universe my breath alone,
Alpha-Omega, First-and-Last,
All Future, Present, and all Past.
From east and west, from north and south,
My breath draws all things to my mouth.
Chewed and digested well they are,
Each time breathed out with better care,
Developing Jehovah's plan
To make at last a perfect man.
Ten hundred thousand cycles long
Before he's purged from every wrong,
So deep did sink in Adam's fall
The Angel in the animal.

VI.

"Omnunmo I, the All-in-One.
All to and fro my breath will run,
Until perfection is attained

When changes all come to an end,
The cycles all completely full,
Improvement all impossible.
Then I'll forever close my lips,
And nevermore the worlds eclipse.
Outdone then all comparisons,
Outparagoned all paragons.
Then will begin, ended God's curse,
The Sabbath of the Universe,
The reign of pure felicity.
Omnunmo dead eternally.

VII.

"Omnunmo dead, the All-in-One.
The Christ of Mercy on His Throne:
Forevermore and everywhere,
Men happy as the Angels are;
All creatures in sky, land or sea,
Joining in one grand jubilee.
E'en they who did in Hell abide,
By fire and suffering purified,
Forgiven and transfigured quite,
All filled with bliss, with glory bright,
Around the Throne hosannas sing
To Christ the Lamb and God the King.
All powerful that Sacrifice,
Mankind redeemed, earth Paradise."

The music and the words great thoughts aroused
Too ponderous for the Scribe's philosophy,
And all conclusions clogged. In wonderment
He looked around: his Angel guide had gone.

CANTO 9.

The Mystic Wreath.

Upon a column near, a swinging Wreath
Of Myrtle hung, and Laurel, gemmed with flowers;
Above the Wreath in orient pearls these lines:
*"Where lives and rules the Hell-born love of power,
There yields and dies the Heaven-born power of love."*
Upon his soul a fascination seized
To solve what seemed to him a mystery.
The Myrtle Leaves with words and scenes were filled

Of earth and Paradise: the Laurel Leaves
Of Pandemonium told—but most were gone.
The Wreath he took, and reading was absorbed
In soul and sense. Oblivious he was;
And when he waked, upon that mound of moss
He lay, beside that fair lake's classic shore.
Afar did sound old Hobart's larum bell,
While softly to his ears came o'er the lake
The mystic song of Theta Delta Chi.
He looked around, then heaved a sigh of pain,
Thinking how fancy fairer was than fact,
And how divine would be this life on earth
Could our bright dreams be wholly realized;
Could we our carnal natures all divorce,
And from our souls drive out the animal;
Living ever in love with those who love,
Needing no food but friendship, truth and song,
Floating by power of will whither we wished,
Celestial sights and sound and Angels fair
Making our lives of joys one ceaseless round—
And *She*—yes, *She*, forever at our side!

Up rose the Scribe and slowly gazed around,
As though not certain where or what he was.
Perchance he'd dreamed; but if a dream how real!
Nor was that Wreath crazed fancy's bastard child.
Who further reads its mystic words will learn,
Dimmed by the mists of human memory,
And tainted some by man's imaginings.

All bound to earth is man by bonds of clay,
With vilest beasts conjoined in brotherhood,
His body finally the prey of worms;
But dwells there in his soul a power divine
That worms know not, and beasts but dimly dream,
That to the highest skies his thoughts lifts up,
And round the world bears him on eagle's wings;
Of things of sight and sound and smell and taste
It new worlds makes, new heavens and new men,

Debasing or transfiguring at will,
Depicting scenes as fair as Paradise,
Or, when whim prompts, as black as Tartarus;
Enthroning love in perfect beauteousness,
Or making hate the monarch of mankind;—



The Mystic Power of Poetry.

A power that to the skies can men transport,
And from the skies draw fairest angels down:
This power in music, song and verse displayed,
In sculptured stone and pictured scene expressed,
This mystic power, the power of poetry.

CHAPTER II.

The Earth and the Earthlings.

PROEM.

The words on this Myrtle Wreath are in the nature of an allegorical poem, and begin with some account of the earth, and the wickedness and littleness of its occupants. The Scribe, humiliated by this account, speaks of man's virtues, and of his intellect, and of his possibilities. The Leaves tell, also, of a moody Youth of noble lineage on whom and his House rested a curse, and who loved an ideal Maid, and was, in turn, loved by a pitying Angel.

CANTO 1.

The Earth.

These are the words upon the *Myrtle Leaves*
The Scribe did read, (or dreamed that he did read,) Ignoring both the meters and the rhymes;
And where his memory failed, imagining;—
But oh, so faulty is his rendering
That his rude lines are but vile sacrilege:

Come, aid me, Truth and Love and Purity,
While I essay some mysteries to weave
With threads of allegory, tinted like
The land, the sea and sky, Heaven and Hell,
The hearts of men and maids, angels and fiends,—

Reality my loom, fancy my warp
And woof and silken threads: *so read the Leaves.*

Far, far away, beyond the outer orbs,
A planet rolls around its blazing sire,—
A planet fair, but small, and cursed with woes.
Sin there her temples has, and 'neath her sway
Hundreds of millions bow, and seem content.
Her chiefest sanctuary's built to Self,
And "I Myself" is her chief idol's name.
Her ruling priestess fair Deceit, the first
And best beloved of all her progeny,—
Who donneth many robes; now clad in white
Like Purity, now smiling sweet as Love,
She wins loud plaudits from the multitude;
Then garbed like Justice frowning draws the sword,
Uplifts the scales, reads from the holy law,
And uses Heaven's words for deeds of Hell.
Oft with a sister's smile and tender voice,
She pledges sympathy and friendship true
While seeking only opportunity
Your cup to poison, or your back to stab.

There Envy sneaks in shades, alone,
And snarling feeds upon all others' joys,
Having no balm but hate, no salves but spites:
The more she eats the more her hunger grows;
And oft she'd suffer pain, or loss of sight,
Than witness long a neighbor's wealth or bliss.
Concupiscence and blind Intemperance,
From nobler things transformed by Selfishness,
Like Circe's swine wallow amid their filth,
And breed disease of body, mind and soul.
Quick Wrath, with thunder-brow and lightning-eye,
His dagger draws and strikes before he thinks,—
And then, perchance, repents forevermore —
In vain, in vain. His brother, slow Revenge,
Looking enigmas, pours his deadly drug
When none doth see, and gloats when drinks his foe;

Or else in ambush waits to strike him down.
Hates, like dire upas trees, are everywhere,
Withering whate'er their shadows fall upon.

There Modesty is oft hypocrisy,
And oftener still a consciousness of sin;
But when unfeigned a tempting prey for guile.
Friendships are bought and sold as merchandise:
The more one's wealth the more his friendship's worth;
And what is done in guise of friendliness
Is made a debt, and recompense desired.
Deeds of the rich and great, though full of wrong,
With practised smiles, low bows, and gracious words,
Are honeyed o'er — then swallowed with closed eyes,
And affirmations of their excellence.

Saintlike, Religion to the altar creeps
On Sabbath morns, and formally bows down;
His hundreds gives he at his church's call,
And thanks his God he is no publican;—
But stranger to the cause of Christ his heart,
His helpless debtors grinds he into rags,
From widows' tearful eyes he turns his face,
To orphans' wails he closes tight his ears;
His sons in idleness and villainy
He rears, on choicest foods and wines he feasts,
And leaves poor Lazarus to eat with dogs.

Wars, too, are waged; nation 'gainst nation ranged,
Race against race; millions in battles slain,
Cities destroyed, states ravaged, kingdoms crushed,
Whole continents made black with widows' weeds,
While pillage, arson, rape and butchery
Sweep all the earth, till law and order flee,
And Chaos comes again in riotry
And beastliness,—and Satan seems supreme.
E'en now great armies fight upon its fields,
Armies once brothers and once countrymen,
Now changed by hate to most malignant foes,
A thousand miles and more black cannon belch

Their monstrous iron vomit on their foes;
Great ships in mail as hard as adamant
The wide seas shake with their artillery,
And knock great fortresses, with warriors filled,
In ruin down upon the quaking earth.
Thick is the air with fratricidal balls,
And monstrous bombs with death and havoc filled.
Like awful thunder clouds legions of men
Sweep o'er the plains from mountains to the sea;
Homes, barns and unreaped harvests all destroyed;
In rattling raids, like to a hurricane,



A Raid by Cavalry.

Thousands of horsemen rush upon their foes;
The very earth is gorged with human blood;
In conflagrations vast cities consumed;
And States in demolition tumbled down.
Now shouts of victory roll o'er land and sea,
Like ocean's answer to the thunder-god.
Beneath the battle's smoke are wails of woe;
Death and Destruction in great fury ride.
And Law once more gives place to Anarchy.

Now grow so thick the awful battle-clouds
That horrible aceldama they hide,
Where brothers' blood like water has been spilled,
And brothers' bones like rubbish have been crushed;—
And all this done in Liberty's fair name!

CANTO 2.

The Littleness of Man.

In stone life sleeps; in plant it merely dreams;
In beast it wakes and feels; in man it thinks,
Imagines, plans; and craves to be a god,
And rule in majesty the universe.

Life's like a string of many-colored beads:
Some white for fortune, some for sorrow black,
Some red for love, and yellow some for hate,
Some few of gold, but most of brass and clay:
And varied so the destinies of men.
Man's book of life's a very paradox:
Love is its brightly colored frontispiece
That little does its contents illustrate.
Its first chapter is by the angel, Hope—
The demon of despair indites the last:
Most true, indeed, the publisher is God,
But Sin and Folly oft the editors.

Of all things man is the epitome:
Heaven and earth and hell are all in him
Wrapped up; angels and devils, birds and beasts,
Fishes, reptiles, trees and every plant,
All are conjoined in his totality,—
The jest and glory of created things,
The unsolved riddle of the universe.
Cruel his nature as a beast of prey,
And seldom happy but when acting lord:
His very sports oft cause another pain,
And all his laughs are at some one's expense.

Such are these earthlings! Most grotesque, indeed,
Their conceits, antics and frivolities:
Mere monkeys, popinjays and mountebanks,
Acting as though they thought their doings real
When in God's sight they're mere caricatures!

And yet that orb, where all these crimes are done,
Is a mere atom, insignificant;—
And yet those men, who so like demons act,
Mere insects are, exceedingly minute;
Their life so brief it ends when it begins.
Man a mere shadow is that shadows seeks
In shadowy realms of deeper shadows made.
Yet pity have we for that mote-like orb,
And love for all its tiny denizens;—
For bulk makes not or great, or strong, or wise;
And length of life proves not the liver good,
Or great his works: *so read the lettered Leaves.*

CANTO 3.

Man's Virtues.

Grieved was the Scribe such bitter words to read:
While true they were, not all the truth they seemed;
Of man's good parts and noble qualities
Nothing was said. Then thus the Scribe did speak:

"No, not an angel yet is mortal man,
Nor yet a devil, nor a soulless beast.
The blossom of all animals is man;
His face so radiant is his body's bloom,
The blossoms of his face his beaming eyes,
Like gorgeous gems made bright for ornaments;
His loving soul the blossom of his eyes
Seen in their depths like heaven in a lake.
But woman is the blossom of mankind,
Of all God's works the fairest, purest, best;
And of all womankind the brightest bloom,

Earth's truest angel, is the loving wife,
The only Eden flower left in the world.

Men love I not to any great degree;
But with respect profound I honor *Man*.
So weak, so vile, so prejudiced are men,
So little higher than the nobler brutes;—
But *Man* is great and lofty, wise and good,
And towers in nature like a very god.
Pre-eminent o'er every man is *Man*;
No sage has wisdom in so great degree,
No doctor is in learning so profound,
His aspirations loftier than a saint's,
His hopes more grand than any optimist's,
No hero has such peerless bravery,
No judge a judgment so unprejudiced,
So deep and pure a love no lover has,
More steadfast than a martyr's is his faith,
No poet has such dreams of ravishment,
His dignity more glorious than a king's:
More great in all things good than any man,
Of all creation *Man* is God's ideal.

Men folly, love and wisdom disregard;
Their time in vice and idleness they spend,
And in small things fritter their lives away:
Such is the force of their heredity.
But *Man* unto the front keeps high his flag,
Promoting peace, enforcing law and right,
In reach of all erecting church and school,
Spreading afar the arts and sciences,
And making earth a home befitting gods.

Women by many virtues are adorned,
Men by but few; but these do lift them high
Above all beasts, and prove them kin to God.
But for some little vice that bars her way
Women would angels be in Paradise.
What is of good on earth to them is due:
Through love the've lifted men unto the skies,

And in the stony breasts of cruel beasts
Have put a heart of gentle humbleness.
No charm such wonders works as perfect love,
And what of Paradise on earth is left
Is by the loving hands of women made.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.



The Charm of Love.

Men I esteem, but women I adore.
By loving women men become as saints,
By loving Christ women angels become.

Although base slaves are many million men,
Slaves to a master's law, or master's thought,
Yet Freedom's circle's ever widening,
And many lands rejoice beneath her smile:
But long and desperate has the struggle been.
Freedom, in storms of revolution born,

On battle-fields baptized in human blood,
Rocked in the earthquake throes of mighty thoughts,
To valor trained and sleepless vigilance,
Stands lofty on the highest mountain-top
Her banner glowing like a meteor,
Upon her sword-blade Victory's autograph;
And soon to all the sons of men will sound
Her trump of universal jubilee.

Though all earth's millions on the other side,
One man square in the right has God for friend:
They two make up a vast majority.
How mighty, then, the holy cause of right
When millions gladly battle 'neath her flag!
As in a stone a lovely angel sleeps,
Waiting the sculptor's hand to ope the door,
And bid her wake and come in beauty forth;
So in the man-that-is the man-to-be
Doth sleep, waiting the coming centuries
To chisel off all vices and defects,
And show the world the Man Immaculate.

The virtues are man's chiefest ornaments,
But vices oft his virtues do obscure.
Pirates have bravery, swindlers have sense,
Drunkards speak truth, outlaws show energy,
And other virtues many base men have;
But righteousness to love, pity to feel,
Justice to do, and charity to act,—
And cruel martyrdom to undergo
Rather than vary from the line of right —
These are the traits that show a man divine,
And these the traits men honor more and more.

"What out of life does man get, at the best?
He eats, he drinks, he sleeps—perhaps begets,
Grows old and dies; and that's his end—mere dust."
So saith the fiend; but faith makes quick reply:
"That's true of man the beast; but false of man
The angel that's to be: he out of life

The pleasure gets in youth of doing good,
And in old age, of well remembering it;
And when through faith in Christ he's born again,
Born of Love's holy spirit and Love's soul,
Transfigured quite his human nature is
Into the life eternal and divine:
Then on his brow and palms His name God writes,
Into his heart and mouth a new song puts;—
And when he dies on earth he's born in Heaven,
And there in bliss doth live forevermore.

CANTO 4.

Man's Mighty Intellect.

The lives of men are measured by their thoughts
And feelings: every thought a minute is.
A thousand years philosophers do live,
But men unlearned not e'en a thousand days.
Unto a beast ten years is but a month
In thought; unto a tree is but a day,
And to a rock not e'en a moment brief.
What dreams not, feels not, thinks not, does not live,
And time to it is merely nothingness.
Thoughts some men have that count a thousand years,
And feelings some that time cannot efface.

Sublime indeed the intellect of man.
Lord of the empire of the mundane mind,
Who bounds can set to its capacity?
Making his roads 'neath mountains, rivers, seas;
Stringing his wires of speech o'er all the earth;
Harnessing steam and electricity,
Walking with search-lights on the ocean's floor,
Swimming in boats like fish beneath the sea,
Flying like condor through the upper air,
With brow serene and a far-piercing eye,
Scanning the stars, the planets and their moons,

Viewing the realms of space, the bounds of time,
Infinity, eternity and—God;
Interrogating all that has been done
In all the universe, in ages gone;
Forecasting all that e'er will come to pass,
Oft boldly challenging th' Omnipotent
As to His wisdom or His righteousness,—
And deeming it no great impertinence
To use the gifts God has Himself bestowed;—
Or like archangel grand spreading its wings,
Sailing the skies unto the central sun
Whereof our sun is but a satellite;
Soaring all fearless round the throne of God,
Searching for flaws in all His many works,
Probing the secrets of Omnipotence,
Sitting in judgment on creation's plans,
Finding much fault with nature's handiwork,
Defying falsehood, fate and destiny,
Its love of knowledge irresistible,
The star of truth its guide and counselor,
Investigating nature's mysteries,
Longing to know all that Omniscience knows,
Solving the problems of eternity,
And all the mysteries of the universe,—
Except the mind itself, what substance is,
What life, what force, and what Jehovah's self.—
In truth, man's intellect's God's brightest son,
And no doubt some day will an ichor find,
Which working through the arteries and veins
Our life will lengthen into centuries.

So geared to truth and right the heart of man
That though a cog may sometimes badly slip,
And wrong be done, yet constant is the force
The mind's machine to keep in harmony
With God's holy decrees immutable.
Though by a low heredity held back,
Yet men and women ever upward climb,
And when the strain of beasts has disappeared,

Their vile instincts and lusts forever gone,
Then in the east the bright millennial star
Will quickly shine, and that day usher in
When Christ shall reign and all men be divine:
Then man the savage will at last be quelled,
And man the angel loom up conqueror.
All evil charms the charm of love outcharms.

Men grow in mind as mountains grow in girth
By slow accretions more than innate force;
And as their shells crustaceans cast aside
A larger growth to make, so growing men
Their notions stale, and prejudices old,
Aside do cast, and greater thus become:
But as expands their mind's circumference
Finer within grows its machinery,
Until the wise men of to-day outshine
The wisest men of Egypt, Greece or Rome,
As Edison's electric light outshines
The smoking candlesticks of Solomon.
What's to be known is as a boundless sea,
While what we know is as a drop of dew:
Yet up the steps of knowledge will men climb
Till no more darkly, as though through a glass,
They nature see, but face to face behold,
Her powers and forces, works and wonders all,
And thus become, what Eve did hope, as gods.
Knowledge makes up the body of the mind,
Fancy its wings, its riches memory,
But truth its heart and soul and very life:
Facts are the bones of which truth's body's made,

In every heart at birth are germs of good,
And seeds of sin; and fortunate is he
Whose germs of good sprout first, and deep root take,
Else sin's vile weeds all good do choke to death.
When some temptation does us overcome,
The world beholds and loud the scoffers scoff;
But when beneath our feet temptation's trod

Nobody sees. Upon the skies are writ
Our weaknesses and all discomfitures;
Denied or doubted are our victories;



The Electric Light.

But in God's book they all are credited,
And on the judgment day we'll get reward.

Using the horoscope of man's great works,
Cities I see arise upon the plains
Like blooming parterres of most lovely flowers,
Each house a blossom rare of beauteousness,
And those who walk the streets like angels look;
The seas are covered far and wide with ships,
In trade or peaceful pleasures all employed,
Nor wind, nor steam, nor tide do them propel,
But harnessed they to elemental force
Now like a steed of air careering wild
Through all the bounds of universal space;
By fit machinery all fields are tilled,
All harvests reaped and saved, and food prepared,—
All labor light, or merely luxury,
And more of brain than brawn, of thought than sweat;
While here and there, high sailing through the air,
Are flying ships like mighty butterflies,
All gorgeously bedecked, with merry crews,
Propelled by elemental energy,
That lifts or lowers, forward or backwards moves
At will, all gravitation neutralized,—
Or else reversed, and Man omnipotent,
And good as he is great; peace everywhere,
And joy, and universal brotherhood.

So man, though bestial now and vile,
Will yet perfection's crown of glory wear.
Asleep within the palace of his mind,
Lie many truths of beauty infinite,
Waiting the kisses of the centuries.
Looking through man into the far beyond,
I see the gods that from his seed will spring,
And earth an Eden fairer than the first.
So man I honor for his progeny,
And in him hail the gods that are to be.
A new heaven and a new earth we'll see,
New men, new women — by development.
Today's religion's part idolatry,

With legends and mythology defiled;
And men to-day but animals well trained
Compared with the grand future's demi-gods;
All nature's forces their obedient slaves,
And earth a Paradise of peace and joy,
The realm of culture, science, art and skill,
The home of truth and perfect righteousness.

CANTO 5.

A Youth of the Earth.

Such, such the orb whereof these Leaves do tell,
Such, such the race whereof this orb's the home.
The best their savage ancestors too near
Plainly to show what yet the race may be.

Upon this orb—*so read the Myrtle Leaves*—
Did dwell a Youth, worthy an angel's love,
His purse how long, his face how beautiful,
How low or glorious his lineage,
Never an angel asks: the heart's the test,
The touchstone true, of what is good or bad.
Elsewhere we never look; and intellect,
However bright or great, is but a sword
In madman's hand—unless good is the heart.
Yet noble was his blood, and great his name.
Of wounds in battle had his father died,
A hero great in valor and in fame.
In grief for her dead lord, so dearly loved,
His mother pined, and died of broken heart.
In morn of life all of his name had died.
An awful spell seemed resting on his house,—
Whereof some secret whisperings he had heard.
'Mid scenes and memories sad that racked his heart,
And filled his nights with dreams of wretchedness,
Nurtured he was; and what to most had charms
Of bliss or beauty, to his grieving soul
Did seem but heartless, hateful mockeries.

Far from the noisy city's crowded streets,
Far from the gilded haunts of pride and vice,
Far from gay fashion's pompous promenades,
And revelry's uproarious hippodromes,
He loved to roam, 'mong mountains, rocks and glens,
Through forests wild and dense, 'long murmuring streams,
Where whispering zephyrs had their summer haunts,
And timid birds unfrightened built their nests.

Weird Shonbirg Hall, his home and its demesne,
Well fitted were, by nature and by fame,
With the mysterious his mind to fill.
Wild were its grounds, the victim of neglect:
Its vines unpruned, its walks grown up in weeds,
O'errun by briars and brush its wide-spread lawns,
Its hedges down, ragged or overgrown,
Its tenant houses sadly gone to wreck:
The lack of landlord's care shone everywhere.
Over the Hall had clambered many vines,
Concealing oft the windows and the doors,
And cumbering the stately portico.
For many years no lights had shone within,
And nought but owls and bats its denizens.

The legend was among the villagers,
That on the battle-field of Willowdale
Where bloody corpses covered all the ground,
Where his great name the Youth's ancestor won
By deeds of strength and valor wonderful,
That he a brave Varangian chief did slay
In awful combat, viewed by all amazed;—
Whereat the dead chief's mother, crazed with grief,
In her dead hero's blood her hands did bathe,
And lifting them to heaven in her rage,
Her long hair floating wildly in the wind,
The gods of earth and sea and sky did call
Vengeance to do on her son's murderer.
"And him I curse, and all his lineage!"
She cried, with flaming eyes and visage wild.

"Cut down in blood shall every Legion die,
Till one, whose heart's been pierced by shaft of pearl,
Shot by Varangian maid, his back shall turn
On ways of war and deeds of wrath and blood,
And like a saint walk in the paths of peace:
Till then my curse shall stand. Oh, seal it, God!"

By this display of wrath and righteousness
Both armies were appalled, and from the field
Retired, as though by God Himself recalled.
So from that fateful day Legion the first,
And all his lineage, while yet in youth,
In blood had died upon some battle-field,
Surpassing all in strength and gallantry—
Victims of that Varangian mother's curse;
And 'neath her spell had withered Shonbirg Hall.

CANTO 6.

A Maid of the Air.

The Youth roamed not alone: all shadow-like
A beauteous maid was ever at his side,
Heard all his words, and hearkened to his sighs.
When on some log, or rock, or grassy bank,
He sat him down, into his eyes she gazed
With looks of tender sympathy—or seemed
To gaze; for whether she a creature was,
With heart and soul, whom he might hope some day
To call his own, and with her live in bliss;
Or whether she a spirit was, of Heaven,
Commissioned to console and comfort him;
Or whether she fancy's own progeny,
Born in the secret chambers of his brain,
He'd no assurance that did satisfy;—
But took her as she seemed, fairly content;
For her sweet face his griefs did charm away.
Yes, she it was that had his thoughts ensnared,
And made him love within himself to live,—

She and nature his chief associates,
The silent vale, the lakelet's dreamy eye,
The solemn mountain path, the sunless grove,
The ocean's lonely strand and rushing surge



The Maid of Air.

Obstreperous but yet harmonious,
And twilight's mystic hour, or early morn,
These were their trysts and times for intercourse.

Each vale-born flower seemed brightened by her smile,
The sleeping lake was placid like her brow,
The evening star had eye and face like hers,
The fragrant zephyr from balsamic firs
A tale of love and her did seem to breathe,
The billowy music of the storm-swept sea
Was eloquent of her, and fraught with ecstasy.
The lightning's vivid flash, so sudden near,
And instant with the thunder's crashing roar,
To him were joys, for then near to his heart,
For safety's sake, she gently snuggling seemed;
And proud he felt of such sweet guardianship.

Near-growing trees, whose loving arms were wrapped
In fond embrace around each other's forms,
Their foliage, flowers and fragrance intermixed,
Waving in unison their many boughs,
And making music like Æolian harps,
Swept by the viewless fingers of the breeze,—
Told of unselfish love and wedded bliss.
Night, loved by few whose deeds are bright and true,
By him was loved as his most sacred hour.
Then wandered he in that mysterious realm
Which marks the boundary 'tween things and dreams,
And with his spirit-love sweet converse held.


CANTO 7.

The Youth's Changing Moods.

Such was this Youth: *so read the Myrtle Leaves.*
Some thought him wise, some shallow and perverse;
Some knew not what they thought; all thought him strange;
Few favored him, and none their love did give.
Yet smitten maids, and those who loved the weird,
Saw much to ponder on, and in their thoughts
Some mystery deep did seem to shield him round.
But he had moods when he was bright as day,

And sunshine scattered with a lavish hand.
Gay is the butterfly,—but brief his life:
From flower to flower he darts, and kisses each;
But dallies not. While fanning their fair cheeks,
With brightest wings and playful flutterings,
Into their fragrant hearts love-words he drops,
Their virgin sweets purloins, then—flies away,
And no more comes, but ever passes by.

So gay the Youth when came his merry moods,
Moods slow to come but very quick to go,
Like sunny days in dreary winter-time;—
And then all smiles his face, all bright his eyes.
Thrice magnetized his words thrilled every heart,
And made his wish their law and sole delight.
But gravitate he would to themes of love,
And when at moonlight hour with maiden fair
Her would he tell of his fair spirit-love,
And in her ears pour all the poetry
Of man's idolatry for her he loves.
Chaste was each thought, and delicate its dress,
But all ideal was,—Utopia
The scene, and Fancy the fond rhapsodist.
A bride all beauty, love and tenderness,
Sweet walks beside the sea, and 'mong the groves,
A grotto cool hid from all other eyes,
A tiny boat upon a tiny lake
Amid green woods, wild rocks and moonlit hills;
A home of flowers, music and kind deeds,
Their pets a snowy dove and young gazelle,
All love their thoughts, one round of bliss their lives.
So did his soul its Eden-dream portray.



CANTO 8.**An Angel Loves this Youth.**

Where dwelt this Youth oft angels hither roam;
Nor is the time of miracles there past:
The innocent they guard, and keep them pure;
The Christian's fevered brow their soft wings fan;
The broken spirit heal they with love's balm,
To souls by tempests tossed they whisper peace.
Their words hear not coarse ears of flesh and blood,
Yet men oft wonder whence some holy thought,
Some sacred charm that in the nick of time
Temptation's power destroyed; in duty's path
Kept firm their feet, away from dens of vice.

Her cherub babe the dreaming mother sees,
Although above its grave the lilies bloom;
The widowed wife thrills with a husband's kiss,
And rests thrice happy in his loving arms,
Despite his body mouldering 'neath the sod;
His maiden's name the sea-drowned lover calls;
Her dreaming eyes she opes, he's by her side,
And o'er her bends in love, kisses her brow,
Fondling with her soft hair so lovingly,
As was his wont: away her sorrow ebbs
All joyfully, and sweet contentment comes:
Like saint she sleeps upon the bed of bliss.

Oh, marvel not that soul can meet with soul,
And spirit with spirit communion hold.
The sea is one, in ocean, gulf and bay;
The air is one, in calm, and breeze, and storm;
The life is one, in plant, and bird, and beast;
All force is one, whate'er its place or form.
In lightning, muscle, gas and gravity;
And mind is one, in man, angel and God.
What stirs the sea of air a wavelet makes
Whose circles widen to the end of space;
What stirs one mind in love that great mind stirs

Of which each mind is a component part,—
And thus soul-throbs do pulsing widen out
Until with thought they touch their counterpart,
And by telepathy converse is held
Subjectively: *so read the Myrtle Leaves.*

This Youth a beauteous angel truly loved:
Where'er his footsteps led she followed him.
Her love, unlike the love of mortal maids,
No taint of sin, and no alloy of self,
Did have, its only aim to guide and bless.
Her saintly soul no thrill of passion touched;
No thought of nuptial love, or carnal bliss,
The holy chamber of her soul could reach.
Knowing that too ideal is spirit-love
A heart of flesh and blood to satisfy,
And that ideal love unrealized
Derangement in the brain will generate,
This angel maid a scheme did fabricate
A fair and lonely one to have him wed,
A virgin pure and good, and fancy free.
In Paradise congenial hearts are matched,
And Paradise is where such hearts are wed.
For every youth there is a maiden born,
His perfect counterpart and complement;
Together they by nature's gentle law
Do gravitate, and when together brought
They love at sight; as one their souls combine,
Like drops of honey in the lily's cup,
And they are one in love forevermore.
But if to meet they fail, wed whom they may,
Their hearts unmated are, and wander oft,
Seeking their destined love they've somehow missed.

And if her having met they fail to wed,
Thwarted by forces irresistible,
With balms, of tears and loving sighs distilled,
Her memory he preserves forever fresh,
Adoring it, as nuns adore a saint.

When thoughts of her bright blossom in his soul
Forthwith she looms all lovely to his view,
And at him looks with smiles innixed with tears.
Then bitter sorrow all his soul doth fill,
And some remorse that, somehow through his fault,
Her peace and his had been forever wrecked.
While she, in turn, like flower whose stem is pierced,
Her head hangs low and pines her life away.
For though without love's warmth a man may live,
And like an animal have joy of life,
Ever unsatisfied is woman's heart
Unless close by her side is him she loves.

The Youth we've seen and know, his destined maid
Is yet behind the veil; she waiteth him,
But neither knoweth it: apart they dwell,
He on the mainland, on an island she,
And fated ne'er to meet most men would think.
But that will happen which an angel plans,
And she and he, the Maiden and the Youth,
As by a miracle will meet, when strikes
The clock of destiny at noon's high hour,
That fateful day: *so read the Myrtle Leaves*.
And then dispelled that curse of Willowdale:
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

Oh, could we see, traced on the page of fate,
The twists and turns, the mazes manifold,
Since day of birth, made by the steps of those
Who their affinity in true love meet
And wed in bliss, more marvellous 'twould seem
That they by chance alone had happed to meet
Than by some angel been together brought.
Thrilling indeed would be the spectacle
Of two such beings, born in distant lands,
Each moving hither, thither, to and fro,—
Now drawing nearer, further now apart,
Until at last, what seemed impossible,

Their paths do meet, and face to face they look
Into each other's eyes — and looking,—love :



Thus will they Meet.

As magnets join when close together brought.

CHAPTER III.

The Sea of Matter and the Air of Mind.

PROEM.

The Youth while floating aimlessly upon the sea falls asleep, and dreams of his spirit-love. While so dreaming an Angel descends upon a star-beam, and communes with him in tenderest love. True love described. This dream is in some way and time to be realized, and this Angel undertakes the achievement. While the Youth yet sleeps an awful storm arises, and his frail boat is wrecked and he hurled into the roaring sea.

CANTO 1.

The Youth's Ocean Dream.

Along the ocean's shore he wandered lone:
A boat he found, and launched it on the tide.
Warm was the night, but cool the ocean air;
And resting at his ease soon was he lost
In the weird mazes of deep reverie.
Above nought but the sky-blue canopy,
Around, nought but the tender summer breeze,
Below nought but the broad breast of the sea
Bearing the boat as mother bears her babe.

Ten thousand stars were swimming in the skies.
Upward he gazed: electric lights they seemed,
Through heaven's windows shining brilliantly,

The angels' chambers lighting up, while they
With modest hands their lily limbs disrobed,
And charms most beauteous, ere rest they sought.
"How sweet and bright must be yon Heaven-home!"
He thought. "There lives my love, my spirit-bride.
Ah, me! But look! yon star them all outshines!
Oh, blessed star, how beautiful thou art!
Her home, perchance, and through its window down
Upon the earth at me she looks in love.
If so, oh, would that I were there with her,
Or she were here with me! Oh, fruitless wish!

"How vast and grand that star-gemmed sapphire dome!
Oh, happy earth to have so fair a sky,
Thy heart to cheer, and make thy soul content.
In those celestial halls the seraphs dwell,
God's daughters, born the first, beloved the most,
A saintly sisterhood, divinely fair.
Perchance my love is in their company.
Oh, all ye creatures of the air and sky,
Ye kind divinities, that love the good,
The true, and beautiful, oh, guard her well,
And shield her round with your bright wings and arms;
For she your sister is, and like you pure.
But see! it moves! that bright star surely moves!
Oh, hear my prayer, all ye celestial forms
Who hang your love-lamps in yon boundless blue,
And by your thoughts alone make melody;
Tell me, I pray, if she be there with you.
Oh, I am frenzied;—but, it comes! it comes!
I swear it comes! Oh, star most beautiful,
How exquisitely bright thy crystal beams!
Nearer it comes, and like a swelling note
Of melody pours through my eyes and ears.
'Tis she! 'tis she! I see and hear and feel!"

Upon a pearly beam of fibrous light
Down slowly moved the star, 'mid harmonies
Of many notes all infinitely sweet,—

Till none could tell whether the radiance bright
The melodies did make, or the melodies
Somehow transmuted were to radiance bright,
The light and music seemed so intertwined,—
Like choristers of flame, whose shining notes
Thrill, rise and fall, as when Æolian twines,
Swept by the modulating fingers of the breeze,
Fill all the air with lights and symphonies.

Oh, what a flood of joy deluged his soul,
When from the light and melody shone forth
An angel's radiant form—his spirit-love!
Unto his throbbing heart her form he clasped,
Unto her lips in frenzy pressed his own,
Till hearing, sight and thought were all transformed
To one supreme beatitude of touch,—
Conscious obliviousness, more blessed than bliss,
Or any ecstasy: *so read the Leaves.*

CANTO 2.

The Youth and the Angel.

Above the glassy sea now rose the moon,
And her white sheen spread o'er the tranquil world.
The stars abashed shrunk backward many steps
Within the sky. A group of silvery isles
Drifted upon the air, while in the north
A crouching storm-cloud watched the little boat
Floating unconscious on the smooth-cheeked sea,
Like sleeping babe upon its mother's breast.

He sighed, at last, like one from pain relieved.
"I thought you'd never come," he said.
"And were our soul-communings nought to you?"
Quick she replied, with loving tenderness;
"When evening came did not I, also, come?
When you did wander in the glens and groves
Your hand did I not softly hold in mine?"

Your eyes gaze through down to your very heart?
And your soul touch with mine in mutual thought,
Pure love's delight and only nutriment?"
His brow she smoothed, and kissed his lips and eyes.

"Yes, 'tis the soul that loves and not the flesh,"
He whispered as her face he drew to his;
"Yet, love's a hunger not quite satisfied
Without both soul and flesh: one touch of thee
Like this is more than days of loving thoughts,
And nights of dreams. Angels may angels love,
And happy be, in thought, though miles apart,
For thought's their only sense; but flesh are we,
And ah, unless we see, and hear, and feel,
Her whom we love, in pain our souls do writhe;
For love unsatisfied is agony.
The bliss of love is when the one beloved
By words and smiles and kiss reciprocates
With all her heart and soul, body and mind."
"Oh, I do grieve to think you've suffered so,"
In sorrow-tones she said, bending her brow
Upon his neck, and sobbing piteously,—
The while her hair he stroked, and kissed her cheek.

Her anguish past, his love the Youth all told;
From its most secret fount tracing its stream
Through all meanderings; now 'neath the trees
And fragrant flowers, now toiling through the sands,
Till wholly dead, had not the pitying night
Her soothing dew poured down and cooled its tongue;
Until at last the hoped-for ocean reached
It rested happy in its bosom's love.

Tight to her breast her white arms clasped the Youth,
And hard against his face her cheek she pressed,
When ended he his heart's sad history.

How long they thus communed they never knew,
Nor thought, nor cared, for when comes perfect love
Grim time doth spread his wings and fly away.

So all things favor love, all seasons, times
And circumstance, for love is king of all,
In all the world God's chiefest viceroy.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

"I mortal was," slowly the angel said;
"And men did call me good and beautiful.
But none I loved: too gross the love they sought,—
A flame of self, consuming and consumed,—
A transient blaze, ashes its residue.
"On such my back I turned, for I adored
What with the senses of a mortal's flesh
I ne'er had seen, nor heard, nor touched, nor felt,—
A brain-born being, fair in mind and mould,
With spirit that in love enveloped mine,
And my heart thrilled, like heavenly melody.
Narcissus-like I pined for what I'd made;
My roses died, and on my sunken cheeks
Withering lilies strewed their fallen leaves.
With ceaseless throbs my half-crazed brain did beat
Its fragile walls so thin that oft I feared
My aching brow, the prison of my mind,
Would burst, and my unhappy soul escape.
"With restless steps in solitudes I roved,
Along the rivers' banks and through the woods,
The happy fish to watch and mated birds,—
And think of him, and plan if things should be.
The more the months I lived the more I loved,
And him I loved grew ever more divine.

"When father Sun sunk in his bed of gold,
And through the sky did peep the infant stars,
He oft did come and whisper in my ears;
But when enchantress Night her spells had laid
Upon the eyes of men and beasts and birds,
And dark and still was all, he tiptoe came.
Oh, how I revelled then in ecstasy!
Sweet sleep no sooner closed my dreaming eyes
Than on my lips I'd feel my lover's kiss,

Unto my yearning heart I'd hug him close,
While his love-beaming eyes would look through mine
Down to the bottom of my joyous soul.

"Then came a change,—sudden—mysterious.
The Sun had wrapped him round with Night's dark robe,
And sunk to slumber in his bed of gold;
But in the sky his sweet-faced wife, the Moon,
Set happy 'mong their little ones, the stars.
How fair that night, so bright, so calm, so still!
Another world this world then seemed to be.
Of light and melody the air was full;
On every side like rainbows flowers shone;
All radiant 'round about roamed spirit forms.
My dream-born lover came: his bride I was,
And lay within his arms, all happiness—
How long I know not, but cold grew his arms;
My heart a fierce pang stung; my eyes I oped,
A serpent black and green did wrap me round,
And fixed on mine his fascinating eyes,
The while his teeth and tongue fed on my heart.
I shrieked and swooned; the shriek quick brought him back.
'Thou'rt false!' cried he, 'and this our love shall end.'
With these death-words he stabbed me to the heart.
Nought was the same, and wholly changed the world,—
And wholly changed was I: gone was all love;
Despair was in my heart, and all in all.
As with a fearful spell my soul was bound;
All blank was all the past: think I could not;
Wandering in labyrinths my reason seemed;
And on my brain its black pall darkness spread.
'She's crazed!' exclaimed a sister dearly loved.
I knew 'twas true, and down I laid, and died—
If dying be to go to happiness;
For ever since all happy have I been—
One round of sweet delights, and full content.
Each wish while wishing is in full fulfilled,
And every hope while hoping realized.
No time, no space, no bar to anything.

What place I think of there in fact I am,
And life is love, and love felicity,—
Love for all things, for God and all he made:
The Maker's love his creatures sanctifies.

"In thought roaming among the sons of men
You I beheld, my counterpart on earth,
Beside you oft I stood, and walked, and sat;
Into your eyes often I gazed, and strove
By gazing hard my gaze to make you feel.
Into your dreaming ear I whispered oft,
And in my happy arms your spirit clasped,—
At least such things I'd think, and with us thought
Is all reality: so angels act.

CANTO 3.

The True Love, and the False.

In substance so the Myrtle Leaves did read:
But lost their beauty and their melody,
When changed into the lingo of mankind.
Some thoughts though wiser far than Solomon's,
Or sweeter than Apollo's lute divine,
Come stumbling forth in stuttering utterance,
In language clothed so coarse and so uncouth,
Discounted are they unto nothingness,
And hooted down the sapient stutterers,—
Which thoughts, if flashed through lips of eloquence,
In words and sentences melodious,
By rhetoric arrayed in rainbow plumes,
And perfumed by the breath of poesy,
The world's applause and assent would have won,
For then to listen were felicity,
To hear and comprehend perfect delight.

So of the words upon the *Myrtle Leaves*:
The beauty of their thoughts could mortals know,
The music of their words and sentences,

The ravishments that in the rhythms lay,
The many cadences mellifluous,
Then would appear how wretched and debased
The Scribe's interpreting: as much transformed
As angel bright changed to some filthy brute.
All this the Scribe well knew, and grieved thereat;
And would the task have wholly laid aside,
But forced, did feel, as by some potent spell,
The Leaves to translate for the sons of men,
As well as man's poor language would permit,
Or his defective memory authorize.
And grieved was he no better could he tell
The thoughts the angel so divinely spoke;
And while so feeling thus did moralize:

That sons of God daughters of men did love
And made them wives, we read in holy writ;
But nowhere, save in old mythology,
Read we that God's daughters have wedded men.
For angel love is pure, and of the soul,
And human flesh its holy flame destroys.
Upon this lower world exist two loves —
A spirit-love that feeds on thoughts alone,
A body-love that feeds on flesh alone,
For man part spirit is and part a brute.
A spirit-love without a body-love
Is ceaseless yearning — utter wretchedness;
A body-love without a spirit-love
Is beastly lust and soon evaporates.
The body-love makes real the spirit-love,
The spirit-love makes pure the body-love:
True perfect love is from their union born,
And lives eternally,—all full of bliss.
Who weds without both loves combined will wed
With half his heart: for his ideal bride,
His counterpart, the other half will sigh;
And to him marriage will be mockery.
But they who in ideal realms abide,—
(Where all seems perfect to their intellect

And so adjusted to their sentiments
That soul and heart and will are satisfied,—)
Oft find the real so inharmonious



True Love.

No place, no person, and no state of facts,
Awakes their hearts to joy, their minds to praise:
To such marriage but disappointment brings,

As butterflies more lovely are in air
Than when possession strips them of their bloom:
Hence poets, actors, painters, novelists,
Oft find their "angel brides" but things of clay,
And cease, at last, to worship at their shrine.

True love and fickle lust half sisters are,
And so alike none but a saintly soul,
Or sinless mind, can difference discern.
To spirit love appeals: her excellence
The pure in heart alone can comprehend.
When true love true love weds there Heaven is,
And joy forevermore, with perfect rest.
Where love her altar builds and lights her fire,
There she as priestess serves unceasingly.
Lust is a thing of eyes and appetites:
She dallies with the young and dissolute.
When one conquest she makes others she seeks.
She kisses for the pleasure to her lips,
Not for the thrill of soul with soul in touch.
Her's is the passion Venus' smile aroused,
And not the flame that glowed in Psyche's soul.
Lust jewels loves, and banquet halls, and wines,
Perfumes, rich robes, dances and brutal shows;
But hates religion, truth and purity.
True Love is wise beyond the sense of men;
Like words from Heaven her counsel's sage and good;
But weak and treacherous are the words of Lust,
And like Circean spells make beasts of men.

Lust on her lover dotes the while he's rich,
But turns her back soon as misfortune comes;
True Love when wealth departs loves all the more,
And opes new founts of tender sympathy.
Lust of the body is; Love of the mind:
The body sees and feels and perishes,
The mind perceives and wholly comprehends,
And lives eternally, and so true Love.
Lust is the appetite beasts have for beasts.

Love is that ceaseless bias of the soul
Towards the soul that does it most attract,
And never happy is till both do meet,—
Then it's at home and never wanders more.
Angels and women love, and sometimes—men.
As rivers run all eager to the sea,
And spreading wide and deep their waters there,
All happy are in ocean's loving arms;
So from the soul flows forth the stream of love
Unto the soul beloved, and ceaseless flows,
Bestowing and receiving happiness.

Love's like the widow's cruze, and faileth not,
Though poured forth constantly. The more it's used
The more there is, and ever sweet and pure,
That satisfies but never satiates,
Filling with joy the hearts that do partake;
But all her oil Lust gulpeth down at once,
And hungereth then until she findeth more.
She hath no prudence nor economy,
But like a child or beast doth gorge herself
Unto satiety, then sleeps and dreams,—
And wakes again to hunger as before.
Love like the faithful needle ever turns
Unto the star she loves, and worships it.
No other star finds favor in her eyes;—
But like an easy turning weather-cock
Lust turns to anyone who whispering smiles,
And worships him—until another comes.

The fountain of her sweets Lust doth not fence,
And many sip the honey from her heart;
But on her fountain Love a seal hath set
That none but one may break, and drink its wine,
And other one would there be sacrilege.
Without a sesame the door of Lust
Doth ope to all her goods and merchandise,
And many they who enter in and spoil.
But Love securely locked her treasures keep,

And gives to one alone the golden key,
Lust's government's a full democracy,
No private property, nor special rights,
But all things all men own and utilize,
And she to every man is everything.

Love's government's a monarchy, where she
Sole sovereign is until her true knight comes,
When she with him her throne and wealth divides,
And of her heart makes him sole emperor,
Kissing his hand in homage of his sway;
And making him her only lord and love,
With him forever lives in peace and bliss.
True love will for her lover gladly die,
And for his sake make every sacrifice;
Not curious his secrets to obtain,
And then divulge them to his enemies,
As did Delilah in the days of old.

The love that's born of sight, and sound, and sense,
Of winsome smiles, and kisses honey-sweet,
Is like the love of brutes that burns to dust.
Its fiercest flame doth soonest end in smoke.
Of words and tones and thoughts, of mind with mind
Eternally enmeshed, is true Love born;
Of soul to soul, spirit to spirit knit,
Of two hearts tuned to live in unison,—
True Love this is—that like eternity
Can never change, grow less, nor cease to be.
When sorrow comes true Love a balm doth bring,
In sickness she a medicine doth have,
In death a solace that the heart consoles
Till Heaven is reached, and there it turns to bliss.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

And here did end the musings of the Scribe,—
How much of which is from the *Myrtle Leaves*,
How much his own conceits, he cannot tell—
His pen has written as came forth the words.



Delilah, whose Love was False.

CANTO 4.

A Dream of Bliss to be Fulfilled.

Charmed by his dream the Youth did slumber long.
Such was his bliss, so satisfied his heart,

Content was he to dream forever on :
Whether in body or in spirit he,
Did matter not, nor wish had he to know.
At last awakened by an insect's sting,
His eyes he oped as in another world,
And looking out nought but the sea he saw,
Around, below, and overhead the sky,
Each seeming but the other's counterpart.
And so bewildered were his eyes and mind
The sea and sky seemed melted into one,
And dreams and facts seemed so identical
Content he was to take them all as real.

"Oh, do I dream, or am I full awake?
But if a dream, oh, then, so sweet a dream,
To sleep I long and nevermore awake;
But dream and dream—eternally to dream,"
So sighed the Youth, bewildered by his bliss.
"A dream tonight,—tomorrow realized,"
Answered a voice. "On earth dreams oft deceive.
Upon one's brow his hard some demon lays,
And specter-like through fancy's airy halls
Throng darksome dreams that creep into the soul.

"But sometimes angels come, and whispering tell
Of Eden lands, where bliss and sunshine reign,
And music, flowers and love make life sublime.
Within the inmost chambers of the soul
In holy tints they paint celestial scenes
That teach one faith and hope and amity,—
Jehovah's whole and only ordinance.
"Such are the dreams of earth, where often he
Most happy is who most deceived hath been.

In Paradise deception is unknown,
And never disappointment shows his head.
The bright ideal of our dreaming sleep
A brighter real hath there when one awakes.
What love and hope would have the will creates,
And bright-eyed fancy's artist-hand adorns.

But on this earth what one save you can say,
'A dream tonight — tomorrow realized?'"

Then ceased the voice. On tip-toe slumber came
And breathed oblivion on his raptured soul —
The last words those of happy prophecy.

CANTO 5.

Morning on the Ocean.

Morn dawned upon the waves: old ocean moved
His mountain billows very drowsily,
And from his pores breathed vapors slowly forth.
By lengthened sleep his huge white eye seemed dulled;
A lonely isle shone shadowy far away,
His daughters' sea-grass lutes were all unstrung,
Down in the deeps moaning most dismally.
But in the east the mountains were awake
And sky-high reared their old gray heads to greet
The lord of light. Their mates the sea birds kissed
And left their homes amid the towering crags
In search of food for them and little ones.
On dusky wings high through the upper air
A selfish raven winged his lonely way,
Like evil fiend, delayed by devilish deeds,
Seeking dark refuge from the gaze of day.
Behind the distant isle a pirate ship
Unfolded one by one her dingy sails,
And strove to stem the lazy-rolling waves.

More deeply blushed the earth: her lord was near.
Cheerless he'd left her through the long dark night,
But now he'd come again, and she was glad.
So blushes the fair bride; when at the morn
Her bridegroom wakes, and lifting up his head
Bends down his eyes upon her happy face;
So glows the face of faithful wife with joy
When after absence long returns her spouse,

And with fond kiss her soul irradiates.
Up comes the sun! His sparkling fresh-born beams
Dart gamboling through the air, and skip along
Old ocean's wrinkled face like sprites of light—
And day was on: *so read the Myrtle Leaves.*

But see! far o'er the farthest wave a boat,—
A little boat,—a mere speck on the sea.
With face upturned the Youth sleeps on its prow:
How long he'd sailed, how far, whither or whence?
Now o'er the mountains' tops the car of day
Arose, bright-burnished for its daily round,
And rolled 'mid dust of fire along the sky.
Arrayed in royal robes of dazzling gold
The lord of light his majesty upreared,
And all the world was sunshine, light and joy.
The clouds affrighted fled unto the north;
The winds that all night long with shiverings
Had left the land and sought the warm-faced waves,
To dally there, and gambol at their ease,
Came sneaking back, and crept among the trees.

Like giant milleped a sein-boat crawled
Beside the shore, stepping with sparkling tread
Its many feet upon the level tide
In unison: the red-garbed fishermen
Slowly rowed, humming low in monotone.
Curving his slender neck disdainfully
To sip the sea, the white swan swam away
All leisurely. Above the wreck-strewn surf
The sea-gulls sailed, with cries obstreperous,
Seeking their fishy prey for morning meal;—
And tripping o'er the sands the fragile snipe,
With eyes intent where spent the waves their force,
For there it knew its pickings would be spread.
Still slowly rose and sunk the glossy waves
Surging rhythmically mellifluous
Upon the shell-clad shores. Still brightly beamed
High up the sun's great shield of blazing gold.

CANTO 6.

The Portents of a Tempest on the Sea. ·

But all around a solemn stillness reigned,
Save the unceasing washing of the surge,
Low and monotonous. Then came weird sounds
Unto the ear, from sea, and land, and sky.
A skulking moan seemed vagrant in the air.
Along the sea a low and hollow boom
Forebodingly did roam; while from the land
Afar faint rumblings came, and mutterings.
The sea-birds' omen-cries began to sound.
Foreshadowed seemed some dread calamity,
Some woe tremendous in demolishment.
Of some dire birth nature near travail seemed,
Some awful quaking of the solid earth,
Some land-destroying upburst of the sea,
Some extirpating cyclone from the sky,
Some all-annihilating cataclysm,
Some doomsday thunderbolt, cyclopean,
Charged with the wrath of God to wreck the world.

Above the northern waves peeps a black cloud.
Backwards the sein-boat turns; his sheltered home
The sea-bird seeks among the distant crags;
The snipes fly o'er the land; and far away
The pirate ship takes refuge in a cove,
Her sails pulls down, her hatches fastens tight,
And sinks her ponderous anchors in the deep,—
Preparing for a storm; for wicked men
The wrath of Heaven dread, and judgment day,
And book of doom: *so read the lettered Leaves.*

Far o'er the sea still floats that tiny boat,—
Still sleeps the dreaming Youth: all nought to him
The portents of the sky, of land and sea;—
Beyond the stars his mind, his spirit's thoughts
Are in another world, in bliss his soul.

All rusting in the air the sun's bright beams;
O'er half the sky has spread menacingly
That gloomy cloud on the horizon far:
On land and sea it frowns. A helpless thing
Old ocean seems, prostrate, and without limbs.
Weary and weak the sun forsakes the sky,
And leaves the world to struggle in the dark.
Zigzag against the wind, a lonely crow
Toward the land flies with a woful caw;
And marshalled southward through the upper air
The long-necked swans are flying far away.
A jagged flash shoots seaward, splintering.
Despairingly from her deep-bosomed heart
All nature sighs. The sea's sepulchral sobs,
The wind's sad moan in dirge-like monotone,
The heaven's long-drawn wail, sound dolefully.
Now 'mong the angry clouds hoarse thunders roar,
While lightnings smite the plains and mountain tops.
Dungioned in darkness is the vanquished sun,
And o'er the mourning earth hangs one huge pall.

CANTO 7.

An Ocean Storm.

Upon the sea swoops down a furious blast.
Old ocean wakes, and growls, and rears his mane,
Foaming in wrath, and ready for a fray.

A flash! the world is all one blood-like blaze!
Horror of horrors! what an awful crash!
The rock-built mountains tremble through and through,
The ocean shudders down through all its deeps;
And nature's elemental bands and bolts
Crack far and wide with roars obstreperous,
As though had sounded forth earth's hour of doom.
His fiery lances hurling from on high,
Abroad in awful wrath the Storm Fiend rides
In his huge chariot of blackest clouds.

His maddened steeds, the dreadful hurricanes,
Devoid of bridles, bits or guiding reins,
And lashed by lightnings into fury wild,
Like frenzied demons with terrific speed
Rush all resistless over land and sea,
Trampling to ruins all beneath their hoofs.
As on down grades his ponderous chariot wheels
Like thunders roar with echoes far and wide,
The roadway seems all into fragments ground,
And earth and sky crack wide from end to end.
Prodigious the direful spectacle,
Filling with horrors bird, and beast, and man,
Making all life uncertain of its fate,
While death and havoc whoop for hellish joy.

Far o'er the waves still floats that tiny boat:
Above, nought but a black and angry sky,
Around, nought but revengeful hurricanes,
Below, nought but dark chasms and devouring waves;
Amid the glooms almost invisible.
The Youth, unconscious of the terrors near,
Still threaded far the mazes of his dreams,
Happy as though asleep in Paradise.
Now, one by one, great drops of bubbling rain
By hands unseen are sown upon the waves.
Another flash! Great God, earth's pillars seem
Thrown down, and dashed to ruin all the world.
The very cloud, whose monstrous hell-hag paunch
This fiery demon bore, shrinks back in fright,
And on the awe-struck earth a deluge drops.
Loud howl the mad tornadoes o'er the sea;
High rise the waves; on billows billows climb,
Frothing in rage to fight the hostile clouds.
The final battle of the elements
Seems on, in fury most tumultuous.
Lightnings on lightnings flash, in fiery wrath,
With peal and roar thunders on thunders crash
Like Hell's artillery. Each strives to rule,
Tornado, lightning, thunder, wave and rain,

Till o'er the stranded world stalks Chaos' ghost,
And smiling hails his kingdom come again.
But see! the boat! struck by a whirlwind's wings.
The curse of Willowdale its wrath doth work.

Black rocks are battling with infuriate waves,
To foam and spray crushing their giant heads.



The Youth in the Storm.

Unceasingly the winds and thunders roar,
Like demon lions warring in the night.
A lightning-flash the awful scene lights up:
Behold, the shore is near, the rocky shore
Of Island Redenfayn. Alas, alas!
That awful mountain-monster of the storm,
With mouth as huge and terrible as Hell's,
Devoureth all, and darkness closes 'round;
The curtain falls upon the awful scene.

But there the Angel was: *so read the Leaves.*
And had not Redenfayn been bolted strong
To earth's foundation rocks, the little isle
Would soon have been in ocean's hungry maw —
So furious was the war of elements
That raged o'er land and sea that awful night.



CHAPTER IV.

Dreams of Hell Engendered by the Storm.

PROEM.

The Youth's boat is wrecked on the Isle of Redenfayn, whose Lord dreams of Hell while the storm is raging. He sees the Demon Smith make gold and gems in the laboratory of the earth; the depths of Hell and its monsters appeared; he saw Hell's magnates and notables in their council hall; witnessed an awful panic and great rebellion; beheld the marshalling of mighty hosts, and a tremendous and appalling battle between the contending armies; viewed Satan's terrible onset in his flaming wrath; then heard proclaimed the truce of Hell, and the war ended. The Scribe appends some reflections of his own on this dream.

CANTO 1.

The Lord of Redenfayn.

Within an inmost room, hid from without
By doors and tapestries, upon his couch
Lay wrapped in sleep the Lord of Redenfayn;
While nestling on the floor, close by his side,
Her hand in his, her head upon his arm,
His daughter prayed for God's deliverance;—
A being she so fair to view, her face
An opal seemed glowing with pearly light,
As though her saintly soul was radiant

On Redenfayn bright was the morning's dawn;
But had not ceased old ocean's batterings
Upon the little island's sturdy rocks.
Passed had the storm, but full were sea and shore
Of fragments of the wrecks and ravages
Its wrath had wrought. Early arose the Sire,—
Sole man upon the Island Redenfayn,
Grey-bearded and grey-haired, but tall, and straight,
Stalwart and strong: half priest, half warrior
Did he appear; half human, half divine:
Such was his grandeur and his majesty.
He early rose, upon the world to look;
His heart misgivings felt if nature had
In safety stood that war of elements,
Which sea, and land, and sky had so convulsed.

Beside him stood a Maid, as angel fair.
"Oh, child," he said; "was ever such a storm?
If demons be, goblins and fiends of Hell,
That stir the elements to horrid strife,
And work through dreams upon the minds of men,
Then turned loose every devil was last night
His uttermost to do the earth to wreck,
And all the pangs of Hell make mortals feel
While yet on earth alive,—and so exempt.

"Why nature was not wholly overthrown,
And all supreme old Chaos made again,
Earth, air and water, land and sea and sky,
Into one monstrous mass of wreckage piled
Beyond all restoration or repair;—
And why in deepest Hell I was so plunged,
To sights and sounds so horrible exposed,
And yet to earth brought back alive, unhurt,
Of all my mortal life will ever be
Its greatest mystery. To us, my child,
These strange events some serious change presage,
Whether for weal or woe no mortal knows;
Perchance for weal—else why we left alive?

The demon thunders of the universe
Seemed all unchained, and on a helpless world
Let loose, their wrath to wreak and their revenge
To gorge, with direful demolition vast,—
Swift roaming to and fro, and for their prey
Loud bellowing, goring the skies and seas,
And loosening the bolts that hold the world,—
While all around red lightnings slashed the clouds
Unto the quick, making them squirm and howl.

“Sure, child, so dire a night there never was
Since out of Chaos God did frame the world,
And awful must the devastation be
To towns and cities on the distant shores.
Our rock sometimes I thought would blow away,
And then I thought we’d all be swallowed up
By the black billows of the maddened sea.
All nature in one vast rebellion seemed
And heaven and earth fierce battling to survive.”

CANTO 2.

The Sire's Dream of the Demon Smith.

“And oh, more dreadful still the dream I had.
A hissing flame the brazen lightnings flashed
That lit the earth, and made each cavern dark
More light than day; a giant thunderbolt
The solid rock did crack on which I stood;
Into the earth I felt my spirit sink,
And on my soul an awful horror seized.

“Great fiery streams of melted iron were
Earth’s bowels, squirming like huge snakes in pain.
But on I passed, or else had soon been dead.
Came into view a most stupendous forge,
Where worked a giant smith, grizzly, begrimed,
Upon his brow sweat-drops as large as grapes
And red as blood; his arms with black veins streaked,

Like roots of trees; of Titan mold his hands,
Each finger larger than a bullock's leg.

"His hands Cyclopean seized a chaos-lump
And plunged it in a monstrous crucible.
Outburst the smoke in solid streams of pitch;
Then flames of fire, redder far than blood,
But ending soon in white like lightning's flash,
Shot upward high as sight. Now o'er the brim
Poured shining streams of iron, copper, lead
And tin, and other metals used by man.
But still did boil and flame the crucible:
Whereat his hands the grizzly smith upraised
And thundered forth some mystic syllables
My mind could not contain, nor memory hold.
Therewith burst on my ear a horrid crash
As though momentum irresistible
'Gainst adamant immovable had struck,
Shocking unto its core the universe.
A shriek of agony my soul did tear,
When through the solid walls into the forge
Burst demon-slaves, gigantic beasts of Hell,
Within their hands an Ethiop chaos-fiend,
Enormous, shapeless and unspeakable,
Composed in part, he seemed, of devil, wolf,
Gorilla, tiger, bull-dog, lion, bear,
Hyena, wild boar and huge octopus,
Dismembered and misjoined, a monstrous mass
Conglomerate, thrice three-fold bound in chains,
That creaked and grated as the fiend did writhe.
Most horrible his struggles and his groans —
One squirming mass of hell-like agony;
Rolling his huge and horrid blood-shot eyes,
His great teeth grinding, snapping oft his claws,
His horns, and spines and fins as stiff as steel,
His barbed tail writhing, and through every pore
Shot fiery jets of red, blue, green and white.

"An awful word, a malediction dire,
The smith roared forth, and fiercely stamped the floor:
The great walls trembled like a jelly mass.
Into that monstrous smelting crucible
The demon-slaves then tossed that writhing mass
Of smoking, flaming, shrieking hideousness;
Wherefrom there burst a sound to freeze the soul,
And still the heart,—a sound that was a howl
Of agony, a roar of rage, a wail
Of utter wretchedness, a storming sigh
Of wild despair, in one outcry all mixed,—
As though the demon's life and soul and heart,
And hopes and hates had all gone out at once
In sudden massacre to endless death.

"A slimy scum arose and bubbled o'er
The crucible, made of the demon's blood,
Turning to gold and silver on the floor.
Then spoke the smith a word in undertone,
And from the crucible the slag and dregs
Were by the demon-slaves poured on the floor,—
A nauseous mass of filth innixed with gems
Of every color known on land or sea:
Carbuncles, rubies, sapphires, emeralds,
Diamonds and beryls, jets and malachites,
Bloodstones, cats-eyes, opals, jaspers, sards,
Garnets, agates, turquoises, amethysts,
Topaz, onyx and crystals infinite,—
As though a rainbow had been petrified,
And crumbled there, a miscellaneous mass.

"A voice then hissed these words,—perhaps the smith:
'Engendered of the slime of demon life,
Mixed with the oozing of chaotic blood,
Each lustrous gem and metal exquisite,
Some sparkles of a demon's soul contains,
And whoso keeps these gems and metals bright
Will feel the virus of their conjury.'

CANTO 3.

The Sire's Dream of Hell.

"Another crash, and all was dark as night.
Down, down, I went, whither I could not tell,—
But oh, such sounds, such sounds, were in my ears!
Such ceaseless groans of racking agony!
Such storming sighs of woe unutterable!
Curses I heard so thund'rous loud, so full
Of wrath and hate, so hot with rage, so long
Of utterance, they made the darkness quake,
And their reverberations shook all hell,
Opening wide cracks within its awful walls.
A sea of fire I saw, stretching afar,
And human shapes therein did squirm and writhe,
Like maggots in a putrid mass beneath
A tropic sun—their numbers numberless.
The very air seemed made of sounds of woe,
Pierced now and then by some gigantic shriek,
As lightnings pierce the midnight moonless sky
When cyclones roar, and rain-clouds shed their floods.

"I saw Despair flapping her ashen wings
Above the billows of this fiery sea,—
Her yellow stagnant eyes oozed pestilence
That cankered every heart she looked upon,
And bred vile worms therein that every hope
Devoured while yet in bud—appalling sight!

"And as I gazed upon that awful scene,
Along the waves a horrid Dragon strode,
Of form most indistinct, robed in a cloud,—
All eyes, and teeth, and claws, and fiery stings.
Above its nine-horned head a monstrous tail
It swung, with many barbs, and lashed the waves,
Squirting afar the venom of its wrath—
Venom that clung magnetic 'round each ghost,
And rusted every nerve, with pain intense.
The monster looked a look that all did see.

And each did think for him alone designed:
Ceaseless its awful jaws it gnashed, and ground
Its brazen teeth, with slimy slobber filled.
A hundred arms on every side stretched forth,
And every arm a chilling fear let fly
At every trembling soul: some sought to dive
Below the fiery waves—once hell, now heaven,—
So dire that goblin seemed. About its sides
Imagination spread her magic veil
Of lenses made, mighty to magnify,
More mighty to distort. Slowly it strode:
Close in its rear crawled crowds of scorpions,
Gigantic spiders, worms, and centipedes,
Green lizards, vipers and big-bellied bugs,
While overhead were swarms of hornets huge,—
All poisonous things that crawl, or swim, or fly,
Hell's vermin brood. Alas, most wretched souls,
Bit, scratched and stung by multitudes at once,
Leaving no spot of body, face or limb,
Without its own peculiar throb of pain
Intense, and torment most unbearable.

CANTO 4.

Council of Hell's Notables.

"More horrid sights and sounds were thronging thick
When o'er Hell's wide domains rung loud these words:
'Hear, oh ye Princes, Powers and Viceroys,
Of Satan's realm imperial! Ye Fiends,
Horrors and Goblins of infernal fire!
Hear, all ye Wizards, Sages, Oracles,
Schemers and Frauds of Pandemonium.
Your happy tyrannies cease for a spell,
Your glorious pastimes, and amusements fine,—
Your king and lord supreme, Hell's most august
And sacred majesty, grand autocrat
Of Tartarus, and all the Stygians shores,
High potentate of awful Phlegethon,

Of Chaos, Acheron and Erebus,—
Who holds the keys to all the prison doors
Of Hades, and the pit that's bottomless,—
Beëlzebub, demon omnipotent,
Sends to you all summons imperative,
Before his throne to meet: hear and obey!"

"The herald ceased, and all at once out burst
Ten thousand shouts of welcoming response:
Some like a thunder-peal, some like the roar
Of mighty cannon, some like anvil's ring,
Like chieftain's whoop of bloody war were some,
Some like a wolf's wild howl in forest dark,
Some like a rocket's hiss, some like the blare
Of trumpet cracked, some like a camel's bray,
Some like an owl's hoot, or parrot's screech,
Like fog-horn some, or bellow of a bull,
Some like a gong, like panther's squall were some,
Some like the quaver of a hurricane,
Some like sea-lion's bark defying foes,
Some like no creature's known to land or sea,—
Making a babel of infernal tongues,
A hullaballo of all Hell's languages.

"Up rose the dignities of Satan's realms,
With demon joy spreading their swarthy wings
Toward the palace of their potentate,
Whose dome above the thunder-clouds rose high.
Upon its top a mighty urn all filled
With sighs and tears, and groans, and withered hopes:
A raven hugh had in it made her nest,
Her head thrust far beneath her wing, her beak
Thrust far into her heart: her name was Woe.
"Beneath the dome, amid his counsellors,
Upon a lofty throne, Hell's potentate
Imperial Satan, robed in majesty,
Gigantic sat, a crown upon his head
That bore a single star with gleam so strange
It seemed to each the light he loved the most.

So dazzled was I by this magic star
I quite forgot to note his face and form.
'On earth our thrones are tottering,' he said;
'Our empires there are threatened with defeat.



Fiends flying to Hell's Council.

Our slaves and ministers, gifted in guile,
To this abyss send ceaseless prayers for aid
Against our mighty foe the Church of Christ.
Our faithful spies and emissaries shrewd

A great rebellion on the earth report
Against our vested rights and liberties.
In this emergency the aid I seek
Of all my wisest and most loyal chiefs.'

CANTO 5.

The Great Debate in Hell's High Hall

"Each of the thousands in that mighty hall
Aspiring to appear unto his king
'The wisest and most loyal of his chiefs,'
Eager to make a speech sprung to his feet.
Those most persistent and most clamorous
The youngest were and least in counsel skilled,
Till soon Hell's veterans and sages old,
With execrations turned away in rage,—
Which gave the tyros still more confidence,
And made their declamations louder still.
Fierce were their gestures, awful were their frowns,
Grotesque their grimaces, on end their hair,
Their veins all swelled, and rolling wild their eyes.

"The roar obstreperous of resounding words
Shook that great hall unto its topmost dome.
Her head the raven raised, and gave a croak,—
Sure signal of alarm and danger great,
The first since Christ was born in Galilee,—
Whereat Hell's banner tumbled from its staff,
And weird sounds hurtled through the atmosphere.

"In vain did Satan's mace ring on his throne;
In vain his cries for 'order' thundered forth;
In vain for 'peace' his oldest chiefs implored;—
Then left the hall disgusted and in wrath.
The Arch-Fiend swore and raved and gnashed his teeth,
But not a bawler stayed his babble-roar.
Sole lord of the debate each deemed himself,
And thought all others insubordinate.

Supreme for once seemed Hell's democracy,—
Democracy? No, demon-ocracy.
Purple with frantic rage up Satan sprung,
His mace he hurled where loudest seemed the roar,
Then from the hall he strode with awful oaths
And maledictions dire. The roar of words
Abated not, but grew uproarious more.

CANTO 6.

An Awful Panic in Hell.

"Within his secret den, brow in his hands,
And hands between his knees, long Satan mused
On what was best in this emergency.
While musing thus fell prostrate at his feet
A breathless messenger, a speechless thing;
Then came a second, straining mouth and eyes,
And frothing wild, but dumb with agony;
With hands aloft and hair erect, a third
Rushed in, but stuttered in his utterance;
A fourth scarce reached the door, a fifth, a sixth,
And then in squads, and crowds, and multitudes,
Until was gathered there a mighty crowd
Of speechless, breathless, senseless messengers;
While to and fro Hell rocked, and goblin ghosts
Before unseen flitted like shadows through
The murky air of Satan's den, and laughed,
Gibbered and shrieked, like merry maniacs.

"Up from his musings sprang Hell's autocrat,
An ashy paleness quivering o'er his face.
Black was his star,—so bright once in his crown.
And lo, a mighty shape, most indistinct,
But like a huge archangel limbed and winged,
With awful shout, from Satan's wrinkled brow
His diadem did knock, the brazen floor
Ringing beneath its fall portentiously,
And startling echoes sounding far and wide.

"Then to his feet leaped up each messenger,
And tried to speak. Throughout Hell's utmost bounds
Hoarse thunders rolled; a joyous shout of hope
The spirits of the damned sent up, and reared
Aloft the blood-red banner of revolt.
The infernal guards, devoid of leaders fled
In wild dismay. The fiery billows paused
As though in wonder at the startling change;
The obstreperous thunders ceased the air to pound;
Among the clouds the lightnings hid away;
The Dragon-Horror and his vermin train,
Reeking with stench, slunk to their slimy dens.

"Again arose a shout of joy,—so loud
Hell's gates though bolted strong, flew open wide,
With awful crash, heard through the universe.
The obelisk supreme, defying God,
With Satan's image on its lofty top,
His might and majesty to symbolize,
That hitherto o'er Hell resplendent shone,
Fell prone for miles into the damned Abyss,
Upstarting waves whose summits leaped the walls.

"Then did the Arch-Fiend know his jeopardy,
And striding o'er the speechless messengers,
His booming tocsin sounded over Hell,
Ringing that mighty larum bell which ne'er
Before had rung,—save when was born the Christ.

"Close to his throbbing heart his shield he pressed,
And from his sword a thousand lightnings shook.
Beneath his bulging brows his eye-balls rolled
Like threatening suns beneath a thunder-cloud,
Casting where'er he looked a lurid glare —
Such glares earthquakes and hurricanes announce,
Eclipses of the sun, and pestilence.

"With giant strides the Council Hall he reached,
where still loud roared the babel of debate.

"By Hell and Horror, stay your tongues, ye fiends!
See, ruin at your door! Hell's gates ajar!
Your banner down! That obelisk so grand,



Hell's Larum Bell is Rung.

Symbol, at once, of your eternal creed
And my high majesty, in shame its head

Has bowed, and prostrate lies in the Abyss!
The raven has her head upreared, and croaked
Her note of woe, so ominous of fate.
Over the deeps revolt shouts strong and fierce,
And millions march beneath its blood-red flag.
All this, and ye — oh, what a mighty curse
Doth struggle in my soul for utterance!
Too huge for birth! Our kingdom tumbling down,
And you, you chieftains absent from your posts!
Our enemies at work! Our guards retreat!
And nought you do but bawl like idiots!
Away, ye babbling nincompoops, away!
Or in my wrath your swaggering souls I'll rack
With torments forged for traitors. Oh, conceit!
How meek compared with these most supercil —
Begone! all language is outdone — begone!

“That great Hall trembled with his thunder-tones,
And down the statue of Contention fell
With fearful crash, and awful resonance.
Like crows and buzzards from a slaughtered beast
When in their midst the fierce-eyed tiger springs,
Away the wrangling fiends fled in affright,
When o'er their heads flashed Satan's furious sword.

CANTO 7.

Rebellion of the Damned.

“Meanwhile, the rebel hosts in triumph spread
Upon the waves and plains, and ranged themselves
In martial ranks around their favorite chiefs.

“Highest of all stood Cain, of Adam's race
First born, bright as archangel in his prime,
Surrounded by the denizens of Nod,
Who lived in millions before Adam's day.
'Pre-Adamites!' he cried; 'you welcomed me,
Made me your king, when I, a fugitive

From Abel's blood, in your land refuge sought
God's mark on me the badge of empire was:
That badge you honored and I honored you.
Now, by your side I'll battle for your rights,
And all Hell show Cain has a grateful heart.
The first men you who on the earth did live,
The first in this Abyss consigned to dwell,
The first the standard of revolt to raise,—
First let us be to march upon the foe.
And "Enoch!" be our conquering battle-cry?
'Enoch and Cain!' in joy the millions cried,
And straightway marched towards the battle-field.

"Nimrod, the Hunter, grasping Babel's flag,
His giant form upreared, 'mid mighty shouts,
A lightning shaft from out the clouds he wrenched
And bade defiance to the might of Hell.
'Rejoice, ye sons of Eld! Past is your woe,
And bliss upon our souls dawns gloriously.
Hurrah! Again have come old Babel's days
And Hell the weight of heroes' arms shall feel—
Arms that did master all the upper world,
And now shall master all these lower deeps.
The glory of our deathless past requires
That men we be, and by great Baal's name
Men will we be. Of hope and faith drink deep.
Your nerves let valor steel; let victory fire
Your hearts, ye giants who, before the Flood,
Against the sons of God did warfare make.
Beside me now stand close: your swords I trust.
Ye Babel-builders, who on Shinar's plain
For universal domination planned,
Beside me now stand close: your swords I trust.
Heroes of Babylon, Kings of the earth,
A name you made the world will ne'er forget,
Your valor and your fame keep now in mind,
Beside me now stand close: your swords I trust.
Nimrod's great battle-axe lift I aloft,
With it through Hell's black hosts I'll blaze your way.'

Great Shishak, Egypt's most illustrious king,
Headed a host of numbers infinite,
Who far and wide had battled in their day,
And on a hundred fields their valor proved;—
Among his conquests rich and glorious
Jerusalem and all its temple's gold.

"Alexander, Cæsar, and Hannibal,
Exalted shone, their glory unimpaired,
Each leading forth a host of valiant men.
Heroes of Carthage, Greece and Rome, whose names
The history of war illuminate.

"Attila, 'Scourge of God,' king* of the Huns,
Loomed high amid his million warriors bold,
Swearing that they who Rome had conquered once
Would conquer now the fiends of Death and Hell.

"Arousing mighty thunders of applause
From millions of his faithful followers,
His countenance bright with the blaze of joy,
Aloft his crescent flag Mahomet raised,
And from its sheath drew forth his scimeter.
'Allah il Allah, God is God!' he cried;
'His only prophet I, and you his saints.
Rejoice, rejoice! Islam will triumph yet,
And Paradise to us throw wide its gates.
E'en now its thrilling symphonies I hear,
To bliss voluptuous sweet the Houris call,
Sighing to clasp us in their snowy arms.
On earth your scimeters wrought destiny,
And carved out rations from the mass of men.
Oh, infinite your fame terrestrial,
And bliss in Paradise did Allah pledge.
But Fate her veil impenetrable stretched
And from the holy eyes of God concealed
Us all till darkness hither dragged us down.
But full revenge Chance the Omnipotent
Now offers us, and blissful Paradise

Her perfumed beds and beauteous brides displays.
On earth these joys I promised you, but Fate
That cannot see, nor hear, nor feel, nor think,
But only do, through malice or mistake
Plunged us beneath these hellish waves of woe.
But hark that battle-sound! Behold your foe!
One glorious moment more, and freedom's yours.
Allah il Allah! God is God. Fate smiles,
Necessity's our friend, Chance opens wide
The way to glory and felicity.
Out with your scimeters! Your valiant past,
Your just deserts denied, your glorious hopes,
Your sure rewards, your hero souls will nerve.
Faith have, and I by Eden's Lord do swear
This night in Houris' arms you'll sleep and dream.
A round full moon then will our crescent be,
And life a bliss fulfilling and fulfilled,
Forevermore. *Allah il Allah, hu!*
Strike for your Prophet, God and Paradise!
As millions of meteors in the vault of heaven
So gleamed their scimeters innumerable.

"Great Gerghis Khan and mighty Tamerlane
Their Tartar tribes marshalled in endless hosts;
And other kings and chiefs in history famed
Great armies led, with banners wide displayed,
Arrayed for war, intent on victory;—
Till all the plains and seas of boundless Hell
With countless multitudes were peopled thick,—
Of every color, nation, tongue and tribe,
Peoples of continents now long submerged,
Gigantic races long ago extinct,
Atlantians and Oceanicans,
Pre-Adamites and Pre-Columbians.

"Then from the host of Rome a bugle blew,
Whereat there rose ten thousand million shouts,
Ten thousand thousand hosts each giving forth
In its own tongue and style its battle-cry,

Resounding far and wide, and high and low,
And gathering force till every nation's shout
Seemed melted, merged and crowded into one,
The like to which never before was heard,
On land or sea, in Heaven or earth or Hell.
In awful fear the shuddering clouds drew back,
Appalled and paralyzed the waves sank down,
And from its deep and huge foundation rocks
Unto its loftiest arch and highest dome
Hell shook—as though by awful earthquake struck.
Long raged that awful roar exorbitant
Till deafened was each ear, and when it ceased
The very silence seemed a mighty sound.

CANTO 8.

The Hosts of Pandemonium.

“Just then afar I saw loom up to view
A form gigantic, clad in battle-garb,
Fierce striding on, and at his heels a mass
Innumerable,—Satan, and his hosts.

“Each power malign his separate forces led.
Hell's hero-chiefs in myriads appeared:
Caliphs, kaisers and kings, consuls and khans,
Sultans, satraps, sachems, nizams and shahs,
Dukes, rajahs, beys, moguls and hospidors,
Incas, tetrarchs, sirdars and mandarins.
The demons of the seas, the lakes, the plains,
The goblins of the mountains and the vales,
The devils of the fire, the sprites who rule
The atmosphere, the lightnings and the storms;
Warlocks and theurgists, ogres and imps,
Tyrants and murderers, bigots and cheats,
By millions rallied, with discordant cries,
To fight for Satan, Hell and victory.

“Never, since on the plains of Paradise
Jehovah's angels multitudinous.

In brightest armor clad, invincible,
Serenely faced, in battle's dire array,
The marshalled ranks of countless mutineers,
By Satan all seduced to fight their God,
So grand a spectacle had eyes beheld,—
A pageant so stupendous and sublime



A Demon of Hell.

As on Hell's plains now shone spectacular.
Frowning now stood opposed these awful hosts,
Than which none mightier or more numerous
Ever all panoplied for battle met
Beneath the arch of God's wide universe.

"A horrid silence bred in every heart
A leaden pain, and Expectation stood
All breathless on her toes, her bulging eyes
Gazing with steadfast stare, her trembling hands
Concave behind her ears, and mouth wide ope,
Each sound to catch and tremor in the air.

"Facing his hosts Satan in thunder said:
'All hail, compatriots, to your loyalty.
In ages past, my faithful warriors,
Your mighty swords wrought glorious miracles.
Today, by common sympathy made strong,
And mailed with right, as with a shield and helm,
Invincible, we battle for our homes.
Let this day's glory then the past eclipse.
The damned have dared rebel, and in their pride
Before our eyes now float their impious flags,
And bid defiance to your right and might.
Behold now far and wide their armies vast,
Cursed slaves of Hell, seeking to be your lords.
Say, kings and warriors, shall we be slaves?
The slaves of slaves? By all our glorious past
Nor God, nor Fate, nor Chance, nor Destiny,
Our power shall wrest from out our rightful grasp.
No, no! a million million times — no, no!
Base and conceited slaves, we welcomed them
When spurned by Heaven's imperious autocrat
Most brutally from earth and Paradise,
And with us gave them homes and brotherhood.
Vile ingrates they, marplots and anarchists,
Rebels and traitors, 'gainst both God and us,
Seeking their thrones to build upon our necks.
But never other lords this Hell shall have
Till that great day when o'er Jehovah's throne
Supremely high our conquering flag we rear,
And thus become the kings of Paradise.
My heroes brave, of Heaven, earth and Hell,
This day the grandest of your lives shall be,
The most remembered in our calendars.

This day the brightest of eternity
Will make us lords of all the universe,
And yon base rebels all forever chained
In direst dungeons of Hell's deepest deeps.
Be bold, be strong! and 'mid the battle's din
Watch where my sword with lightning flashes gleams.
All rally there, and follow as I lead.
Transcendent victory and eternal bliss
Are surely yours. Then, on my heroes, on!
Yon ingrates give a red-hot dose of Hell!
His harangue Satan ceased, and gave a whoop
Louder than thunder in a midnight storm,
Defying all the rebel malcontents,
And heaped anathemas upon their heads.

CANTO 9.

Battle Between the Devils and the Damned.

"That supreme moment in each army corps,
The sign to charge was given, by trumpet blast,
By bugle cry, by beat of rattling drum,
By roar of gong, by rockets shot on high,
By cannons' boom, by shouts of eager men.

"Then came a crashing most obstreperous.
No other deed, nor word, nor thought, nor wish,
But battle, battle to the final death,
Filled all the hearts of Pandemonium.
Ten million spears flew whizzing through the air,
Ten million swords struck, cut or stabbed their foes,
Ten million axes crashed on helmets and shields,
Ten million cannon tore great lanes of death,
Ten million bombs made havoc where they burst,
Ten million meteors blazed along the sky,
And earthquakes many shook the battle-field.

"As in mid-ocean fight a thousand fleets,
In darkest night, hurling their bursting bombs

And red-hot balls, with crash and boom and flash,
While from the blazing sky huge war-balloons,
Brimstone and fire and deadly hail shoot down,
So fought, so crashed, so shot, so boomed, so blazed,
Within that damned Abyss the hosts of Hell.

"The howling whirlwinds gored the infernal deeps
And waked from putrid sleeps their noisome dregs;
A thousand unknown shapes and goblins strange
Flocked 'mong the clouds to see the awful fray,
And croaked and brayed and gobbled in delight;
With maniac glee huge dragons joined the fight;
The Goblin-Horror and her venom-train,
Both friend and foe bit, stung and scratched and lashed;
Shapeless abominations, vast and grim,
Mixed in the ranks, fighting most furiously;
And wild with joy screamed loud the Hags of Hell.

"On Satan's side, his mightiest warriors,
Apollyon, Baal, Moloch and Belial,
The Titans and the Cyclops, wonders wrought,
With rock, and club, and axe, and spear and sword,
And like tornadoes stormed their several ways,
Piling the slaughtered high on every hand.

"Among the rebels loomed like gods of war,
Cain, guarded by Jehovah's autograph,
Nimrod and Shishak, and brave Hannibal.
Sesostris, Attila and Genghis Khan,
Alexander, Cæsar and Mahomet.
As through huge forest trees a cyclone tears
So tore these heroes through the hosts of Hell;
And Satan's self feared not to venture near.

"The darkness grew and grew until no flash
The bolts of lightning gave; but none the less
O'er Hell's domains the wide-spread battle raged.
With hand to hand, and sword to sword, and spear
To spear, and club to club, and axe to axe,
Army with army clashed, like walls of rock,

Each side a narrow vale high towering,
Into collision dire by earthquake thrown,
With awful roar and crash and utter wreck.

CANTO 10.

Satan's Terrific Onset.

"On thundering came Satan's black body-guard,
Monsters like fiends on monsters mounted high:
On fiery dragons some, and hippogriffs;
Some on chimeras huge, and minotaurs,—
Awful monstromeurons the others rode,—
Prodigious nondescripts, with frightful horns,
Great teeth and claws, and tails with deadly stings.
All in a rage of fury to destroy,
Forward they rushed with bellows, barks and growls,
Roars, howls and brays,—and all soul-freezing cries
Of ravening wrath from hell-born beasts of prey.

"Though such appalling onset well might awe
The iron hearts of kings invincible,
Yet from the rebel hosts rushed boldly out
Ten thousand heroes, brave as Hannibal,
And met that awful charging body-guard
With edge of axe and sword, and point of spear.
Though borne down here and there by force of weight.
Their ranks they ever closed, and havoc made
On bodies, heads and limbs of fiends and steeds,
Till nought was left but fragments of their frames.
Then far and wide throughout the rebel host
Up went a might shout of victory,
Whose echoes shook the heights and depths of Hell,
And in the walls of Heaven a tremor made.

"Now, lo, an awful scene came into view —
Thrice fearful and sublime! The clouds of night
Did part and arch above a mighty plain,
Where Hell's great Chieftain strode infuriate.

Loomed horrid in the air his giant form;
Compared with him Goliath were a dwarf.
Upon his arm like to a blazing sun
His ponderous shield; like meteor flamed his sword,
So long and glittering its yard-wide blade;
Upon his head a brazen helmet flamed,
And all his body clad in adamant,
No sword could cut, no mace nor axe could crush.

"Ten thousand foes the infernal Chief assailed,
Around his head ten thousand weapons shone,
Swords, axes, spears, slung-shots, maces and rocks,
Poured their bombardments on his giant frame,
As though, him conquered, all the field were won.
A thousand armored foes his lightning sword
Cut through and through, gashing their howling souls.
With fury swelled his great frame as he fought,—
And so in might and bulk his foemen grew.

"With horror at the sight, both armies paled:
To watch the combatants they ceased their strife.
As some lone eagle perched upon a tree
Is by a flock of angry hawks assailed;
As isolated light-house in the sea
Is battered by tumultuous winds and waves;
As Teneriffe, high looming in the sky,
Is buffeted by heaven's artillery,—
So Satan by the rebel chiefs was stormed
With broadsides poured upon his stalwart form.

"A massive mace 'gainst Satan's shining helm
Crashed like a thunderbolt, and knocked it far
Like comet through the sky: Satan in rage,
With one wide blow a hundred foes cut down,
And hurled their writhing bodies through the air.

"On raged the war: no halt nor backward step
Did Satan make, but ever forward pressed.
His foes, unterrified and numberless,
With thunders and with flames still hedged him round;

And sword and spear and club and battle-axe
Upon his frame hailed thick and fast and hard.

"And now another scene more awful still:
By sight of Satan filled with direst rage,
With strides Titanic on rushed mighty Cain,
Nimrod and Hannibal and Genghis Khan,
With hosts of furious giant warriors,
Victorious on every field they'd fought,
Swearing they'd slaughter Hell's great champion.

CANTO 11.

The Truce of Hell.

"Forever had the horrid combat raged,
For souls immortal never tire nor die.
All wounds at once are healed, and severed limbs
The parent trunk rejoin, and soon are strong.

"But Prudence breathed in Satan's ear a word:
His helmet gone his prestige had impaired,
And chiefs who'd never doubted wondered what,
While those less firm felt panic in the air:
This at one thought he fully realized.
'Truce' was the one word Prudence spoke: his mind
The problem solved at once: truce he decreed.

"So all through Hell was sounded solemn truce.
On every side forthwith the battle ceased,
And both the hosts moved backward from the field.

"Then, lo, a change of scene: Hell's Council sat.
His massive form the Arch Fiend slowly reared
Above his ebon throne, as though in pain.
'Chieftains, my friends and counsellors,' he said,
'For useless words no time, action we need;
Or ends our empire both in earth and Hell.
This I propose: into our ranks receive
The rebel chiefs, equal with us in power:

Thus furious foes we'll make most faithful friends.
On earth your separate plans you all may try,
And your success their wisdom will attest.
This will contention end, and our one law
Be harmony: this throne the happy bond
In perfect unison to keep us all!

"A shout of assent all unanimous
This plan approved. Commissioners were named,
Baal, Moloch, Loki and Ahriman.
Midway the battle-field they quickly met
Cain, Cæsar, Hannibal and Genghis Khan:
Perpetual peace they made, which shouts of joy
By the contending hosts did ratify.

"Discord thenceforth from Hell's domains exiled
Among the sons of men has made her home,
And here with mighty zeal for Satan works,
Making the earth a pandemonium,
Oft doing most when fairest is her face.

"Here I awoke: gone was that awful storm;
And glad was I on earth to be alive."

"Whether what now I see and hear," he mused;
"But mere dreams are, and I still in a trance,
Or what of Hell last night I saw and heard,
(Hell here on earth and Hell below the earth,)
Was truly real, not bubbles of the brain,
I scarcely know; but to my mind and soul
They seemed so substantive my memory holds
Their shadows' heavy print; nor eyes nor wings
My imagination lifts — too weak from age.
Of that dire Hell on earth the wrecks I see —
Old Chaos' autograph on nature's face;
While of that Hell below the storms I feel
Still undulating in my fevered brain:
So hard it is clearly to judge between
The world of matter and the world of mind."

So dreamed the Sire, or so he saw and heard,
But which, if put on oath, he dare not swear.
Perchance a storm-begotten dream it was,



Discord Leaving Hell for the Earth.

Perchance the scenes of Hell some fiend did show;
But if a dream then counterfeits seemed facts.

CANTO 12.

The Scribe's Reflections on this Dream of Hell.

So read the Leaves: and while the Scribe did read,
And note the scenes in colors pictured forth,
So vivid was the thrilling narrative
He seemed to hear and see and feel and dream
All that the Sire did tell. Bewildered much
Whether 'twas dream or fact, he mused thereon:
None but a hero trained in bloody war,
None but a sage in books of wisdom learned,
None but a poet touched by flame divine,
Could such a dream have had, or having, told,—
Else this no dream but grim reality.

Such dreams are but the driftwood of the mind
By superstition worked in monstrous shapes,
Poets and priests the chief artificers.
Some simple truths, in fiction's garb arrayed,
And compassed 'bout with ceremonies weird,
The good to gratify, the bad to awe,
Religion's called, and stamped with Heaven's seal.
But what were man without such stringency?
Bad as he is a devil would he be:
The world does yet much superstition need.
Fear governs more than love influences.
But love's bright circle ever does enlarge,
Until some day, some distant happy day,
Love all supreme will be, and fear unknown.
Till then are needed creeds to rule the world.
In every creed there lives a soul of truth
Which betters him whose conduct it controls.
A pagan in a heathen land devout
A better man oft is by far than he
In Christendom who scoffs at God and Church.
Much worse it is an atheist to be
Than a devout, sincere idolater,
Who through his idol oft beholds his God,

And rises thus from earth unto the skies.
If devils then and hells the priests do aid
In wicked men the fiends to exorcise,
We must submit infernal dreams to have
When awful midnight storms make hell of earth,
And all the elements like devils act.



CHAPTER V.

The Mystery of Love.

PROEM.

Having described Hell and its horrors of sight, sound, and smell, the Poet faces about, tells of love, introduces the Maid of Redenfayn, gives her first dream of love, and portrays her discovery of the shipwrecked Youth, and her emotions while caring for him,—along with intimations that his Guardian Angel was carrying out some plan of her own, using, at times, the form of a white sea-dove.

CANTO 1.

The Lyric of Love.

Soon as the Scribe had read this fearful dream
Of horrid sights and sounds of inmost Hell,
An organ's melody he seemed to hear,
That thrills did stir and sweetest thoughts awake;
And while enraptured with its dulcet notes
Somehow the *Myrtle Leaves* did seem to tell
The mystery of love, in language such
As angels use, and man cannot translate.
The pendulum of mind and metaphor
From misery to heights of ecstasy
Had swung, by rebound irresistible;
And by a thrilling flash of light and tune
The Scribe's imagination purified,—
Defiled before by sights and sounds of Hell.

Unwilling mortals should love's lyric lose
In all its parts, and nothing know thereof,
The Scribe as best he can its shadows gives,
Robbed of its rhythm, soul and daintiness,
Using coarse words of earth and terms uncouth
To portray thoughts of heavenly poesy.

The Lyric of Love.

Prologue.

All nature is one:
'Tis planet and sun,
'Tis angel and human,
'Tis man and a woman.
They each need the other,
As child and its mother,
As maid and her lover.
For each earth there's a moon,
For each song there's a tune,
For each river a sea,
For each he there's a she.
As dews before flowers,
As mists before showers,
As rain before streams;
So sight before eyeing,
So thoughts before sighing,
So sighs before dreams.
Next cometh the bliss
Of hand-touch and kiss,
The is for the seems.
Thus love the heart captures,
Imbues it with raptures,
And Eden redeems.

Act I. She Sighs.

She thought,—and she sighed;
Her bosom swelled wide.
Why does he not come?
Why does he yet roam
Far, far from her side,
His own destined bride?
Why, why should she mourn,
Their souls apart torn,—
Her life incomplete
Until him she doth meet?

She prays the good-giver
For the sea to her river,
She in it forever.

Act II. He Sighs.

Where shall he find her?
How shall he bind her?
He sigheth afar
For his love and his star.
His soul bath enshrined her,
His spirit entwined her;
But her flesh and her blood
He hath never yet wooed.
The arrow needs quiver,
The ocean its river:
Why keep far apart
Heart that loves heart?

Act III. She Dreams.

The will-be now seems;
The future she dreams:
His face it is fair,
And wavy his hair;
With love his eye gleams,
With sweets his voice teems;
His arms they are strong,
His kiss it is long.
Oh, fruit of fruition!
Oh, moment elysian!

Act IV. He Dreams.

She is fairer than flowers,
Her home is in bowers;
Her face she upturns,
With love her heart burns:
Rich are her dowers
Of bliss-giving powers,
Her face, form, and limb,
Are all, all for him
Filled up to the brim.

Act V. He and She Meet.

Oh, bells, do not ring!
Oh, birds, do not sing!
All earth hath no sound
Sweet as silence profound,
When lovers' lips cling,

'Neath secrecy's wing,
After long wandering;
When lovers' arms twine,



Love meets Love.

And two souls combine;
When will answers will
And thrill giveth thrill:

Then life is divine,
And bliss hath no sting.

Epilogue.

Thus hither and hence,
In endless sequence,
The He and the She,—
Like river and sea.
Nothing single is born,
Nothing doomed as forlorn,
Sighs answer sighs
Though unheard the replies,
For each ear there's a word,
For each scabbard a sword,
For each lady a lord.
Whatever doth roam
Hath somewhere a home;
And love answers love
As dove coos to dove.

CANTO 2.

The Maid of Redenfayn's First Dream of Love.

With troubled face, sometimes a cry of fright,
Listened the Maid, while pictured forth her sire
His dream of Hell—so like reality.
Then to her inner chamber she retired,
And wearied by the storm, and stress of mind,
Lay on her couch, and soon was lost in dreams.

No dream of evil taints an angel's soul,
No thoughts of evil deeds can enter in,
Whate'er of wrong she sees or hears, awake:
For when she sleeps her soul's in Paradise,
And all her body's strength is full renewed.
Long was her sleep, and high and bright the sun,
When she awoke, with all her strength regained,—
And on her face shone bright the light of joy.
That Angel was at work: *so read the Leaves.*
"How sweet a dream! and all so very real!"
The Maiden mused, reclining on her couch,

"Oh, he was fair and sweet to gaze upon!
What tenderness lurked in his gentle eyes!
And in his smiles he tangled up my heart,
Filling my soul with bliss divinely sweet.
Oh, that I had him here within my arms!
How I would press him to my loving breast,
Pour all my soul into his tender eyes,
And feed my mouth upon his luscious lips!

"Oh, if such storms are followed by such dreams,
Then rage your very worst, ye elements!
Ye winds, ye waves, lightnings and thunder-bolts,
Tear earth and heaven, and roar and howl and flash,
Your very uttermost; let demons help,
Let Chaos crush, and smash, tear and upset;
With joy I'll welcome you, and wish you oft,
For oh, at any price, such dreams I'd buy!
But then no storm nor demon that dream brought,
From Heaven it came, and by some Angel borne."

A white sea-dove here near her window lit.

- "Sweet dove," the Maiden thought; "dost thou e'er dream?"
The sea-dove spread her wings, bowed low and cooed.
"Methinks thy looks and motions answer yes,"
She said, little suspecting that the dove
Some spell of love had cast upon her heart.
Bewildered was her mind, and thus she mused:
"Why had I such a dream? what can it mean?
So plainly shone his face his features I
Could paint—as painted on my heart they are.

"Are dreams but fancies of the dreamer's brain?
And nothing more? Sure, something more must be.
Never before a lover have I seen
Nor thoughts of love my peaceful heart disturbed.
But now I'm on a rack. What can it mean?
If father's dream meant something why not mine?

"Oh, mother, dear, and all ye gentle saints,
Come, help me now, for I've no counsellor.

With all my heart and soul that face I love,
And love another never will nor can;—
For in that face my life is all wrapped up,
And if he fails to come I'll die of love;
But die all happy in my grief and love:
Happy that I his face and smile had seen,—
For better 'tis to grieve for love once had
Than grieve because no lover ever came.

“But happy I'll yet be: too fair that dream,
Too like reality to be a cheat.
Deep in my soul I feel a certainty,
Like fate's decree, that he some day will come,
And take me in his arms, and make me his.

“Surely the Angel that this dream did bring
No harm did mean, and no deceit intend.
Never of man dreamed I before, nor thought
Of love for any man,—nor of his kiss.

“Oh, what a new world opens up to me!
New thoughts, new hopes, new faiths and new desires:
The old world of my childhood is behind.
A woman am I now; a broader stage
Henceforth I step upon,—into a brighter life.
I'll meet him soon, for surely soon he'll come:
Too brave, too noble and too true is he
E'en in a dream ever to play me false.

“But oh, that storm last night! no wonder dreamed
My father it was Hell. Mountains of rock
From Heaven seemed upon the earth to fall
With awful crash and roar that shook the world.
And all the mighty winds that ever blew,
Like huge sea-lions seemed in dreadful war
Against both land and sea, and full resolved,
By thunders aided and the earthquake's shocks,
To wreck the universe. Alas, for those
Who on so dire a night were caught at sea!
Surely no ship by mortals ever made

Could 'midst such winds and waves a moment live.
But what to some is death to others life,
And never yet, I've read, a wind so ill
But blows some good to some — perchance to me!
The morning light is glimmering through the glass,
And forth I'll venture to behold the sea."
That Angel was at work: *so read the Leaves.*

CANTO 3.

The Maiden's Stroll Along the Strand.

Bright shone the sun on rocky Redenfayn.
The clouds like ghosts of night had disappeared;
The winds their angry passions had repressed,
And now were gentle as the breath of May;
The thunders slept within their secret caves;
The wrathful billows had been rocked to sleep
Upon the ocean's breast; from out the vales
Bright mists of purest white, like angel hosts,
Were floating o'er the mountains to the sky,
And heaven and earth seemed happy at the change.
But wreckage covered far and wide the strand;
And riven rocks cast down, uprooted trees,
Sea-fowl dead or crippled on the shores,
And piles of debris from the ocean's deeps,
Told of the might and fury of the storm.

Along this wreck-strewn strand the Maiden walked:
So fair she seemed of Heaven — not of earth.
Her cheeks all freshly cast in beauty's mold
Brightened by nature's loving brush with tints
Of rose and lily fused in perfect bloom;
Her brow the triune throne of purity,
And love, and intellect, reigning in peace;
Her lips so red the color seemed scarce dry.
But, oh, her eyes! like jewelled apertures
In Heaven's pearly gates which picture forth
The scenes within of beauty and pure bliss.

Her form and movement seemed to music set
So perfect were their grace and symmetry,
And so in unison they did accord.
A creature, sure, of loveliness divine.

She looked upon the sea: her gauzy dress
Her bosom's charms scarce hid, cradled beneath;
Half bare her arms that seemed of ivory made;
About her neck hung low a chain of gold
Concealed 'neath flowing locks of curling hair,
Low kneeling there in worship of her face,
Like nuns devout praying towards Heaven's gate.
Around her waist a jeweled belt she wore
Lifting her gown above her slippered feet,
And on her head a hat of feathers made.

Thus clad, thus walked, thus looked, this Maid immaculate.
No brain-born nymph, no poet's *peri* fair,
No painter's dream of loveliness divine,
No sculptor's model of angelic grace,
No lover's vision of ideal bride,
Was e'er more beauteous than this island Maid.
Pure joy it was to gaze upon her form,
And more than ecstasy to see her face:
What then the bliss her smile and laugh would give!
The brightest gem that glows beneath the sea,
The brightest flower that blooms upon the earth,
The brightest star that shines within the sky,
Compared with woman's beauty are as nought.

Good cause had she for such a happy face;
For she had dreamed the dream that brings delight,
Like that of Paradise, to maidens' hearts;
Dreamed of a lover come across the sea,
In fragile boat, to claim her for his bride,—
A lover young and tall, and brave and strong,
With tender eyes, sweet smile, and placid brow.
Against his lips her fingers he had pressed,
The while his eyes gazed down into her soul

And thrilled her through and through with ecstasy.
Of some great joy she strong presentment felt:
Many imaginings her dream inspired
Of scenes of tender love and happy days.



The Maid Dreams of Love.

A new and brighter leaf seemed in her book
Of life just turned by some mysterious hand.
So fascinating were her reveries

She heeded not her steps, nor scenes around,
But lived in dreams, and walked as though on air.
And thus she mused, her heart with love aflame,
Her face brighter with smiles than Amoret's:
"Fair unto man, no doubt, did Venus shine
When from the sea in loveliness she came,—
But fairer far my love to me will seem,
When from the sea like a young god he comes,
And smiling with a passion infinite,
Takes both my hands in his all tenderly,
Swears without me a day he cannot live,
And with a look like real idolatry,
Kneels at my feet, and begs me be his bride.
Oh, could I see him now come from the foam,
Fair as the darling in my dream I saw!"

His Guardian Angel had the Maiden's soul
Possessed with love for him: her hour of fate
Was near to strike: *so read the Myrtle Leaves.*

CANTO 4.

The Shipwrecked Youth.

Not of the shore, nor sea, nor sky her thoughts;
Whether she stood, or walked, or soared in air,
Whether awake and musing, or in sleep
Sweet visions had, she did not realize,
And little cared.—so rapturous her trance.
A Sphinx's riddle somehow to be solved,
A mighty factor in her history
Ready to blossom forth in evidence,
And be an epoch in her island life.
Somehow, somewhere near by, her lover seemed;
Out from the sea her dream had pictured him.
Her steps she stayed: far out upon the sea
Her eyes she cast, and thus all softly sang:

The Song of the Island Maid.

"Away, away, the storm-cloud is going,
Then come from the sea, love, I'm waiting for thee;
To-day, to-day, the soft zephyr's blowing,
Then come, come to me, love, I'm waiting for thee.

Away, away, to those bright isles yonder,
To-day, to-day, in thy boat we'll wander.
Away, away, all doubts shall be driven,
To-day, to-day, thy smile shall be Heaven.

Away, away, from thee I'll go never,
To-day, to-day, thine own bride forever.
Away, away, the last night has fled,
To-day, to-day, my love-dream's completed.

Then come from the sea, love, I'm waiting for thee,
Then come, come to me, love, I'm waiting for thee."

A white sea-dove flew by: she turned to look,
And lo, a battered boat lay on the rocks.
Dark thoughts like clouds moved through her sunny mind.
Quick beat her heart. "The very boat!" she said.
Pale grew her blooming cheeks, and weak her limbs.
Around she looked; and lo! there lay the Youth.
"Is this my dream's reality?" she thought.
Perplexed was she: how could a dream be real?
Yet there lay he she'd summoned from the sea!
His eyes he oped. "My spirit-love!" he mused.
The Angel was at work: *so read the Leaves.*

His eyes reclosed, his body was in swoon.
Pale was his cheek, and sunk his pallid lips;
Like death's his marble brow; upon his head
His matted hair lay dark, filled thick with sand,
And blades of ocean grass. Meandering veins
Of slender blue upon his temples shone,
And dark the nails upon his fallow hands.
Perplexed the Maiden stood, and irresolved:
Within her throat her heart did palpitate.
Scarce could she breathe; to earth her feet seemed glued.
What meant the scene? Was it reality,
Or waking dream? Scores of conflicting thoughts

Within her mind rushed wildly to and fro,
Startled by such a strange experience.

His eyelids twitched, a feeble sigh he heaved,
And nervously his slender fingers moved.
In fright she willed to flee, but fixed to earth
Her feet refused to move. Her tender heart
Now pity touched, and to her eyes came tears.
Upon his arm her trembling hand she placed,
And bade him wake, in tones scarce audible;.
As though instinct with fate or mystery,
The instant in his ear her voice did sound,
A nervous tremor shook him through and through.
Slowly his lids rolled up, and blue eyes shone;
Along his face a faint smile tried to crawl.
Half-way his head he raised, when, quick as thought,
She kneeled, and in her hands his shoulders held,
Pillowing upon her lap his faded cheek.
"Who are you, sir?" she queried timidly.
"My name is Legion: I'm the type of hosts,
And all the world my home," slow he replied,
Like one whose mind is weak and wandering.
"How came you here?" half whispering she asked.
"Ah me, I scarce can tell,—so strange it is,"
He answered with a sigh,—almost a groan.
"Like life it is—and yet so unlike life.
Methinks I am awake, but whether this
Be truth, or dream, or life, or coming death,
I'm not assured;—perchance I'm in a craze.
Like hers your eyes and face and tender voice—
But oh, the torture that doth tear my brain.
Now let me sleep—too tired to face the light;—
But leave me not, your spirit comforts mine."
Deep in her heart his words and looks did steal,
And woke a pity close akin to love.

Upon the cool sea-grass his head she laid,
And with some boughs she screened him from the sun,—
While filled her eyes with tears, her heart with grief.

Somehow it seemed that he her lover was,
Come from the sea in answer to her song.
No youth before her eyes had ever seen,
Save in her infancy—and in that dream.
And was this truly he, beyond all doubt?
No mockery nor cruel counterfeit?

CANTO 5.

The Guardian Angel Developing Her Plans.

Him had she seen that morn in land of dreams,—
A radiant youth, had heard his words of love,
Had felt his gaze sink deep into her soul.
How she had sighed to wake and find him gone;—
A thing of thought, an echo of herself.
All o'er her spirit's palace-walls were scenes
Of perfect love's most pure beatitudes:
A winsome walk by lonely riverside,
A grassy vale with an embowered seat,
A vine-clad isle and boat on moonlit lake,
And he and she in summer's noon of bliss.
Such were some pictures in that morning dream.

Oh, guileless maidenhood! how sweet thou art!
How free from mortal taint thy saintly soul!
Allied art thou to Heaven's sisterhood,
Fair cousin of the sacred seraphim.
But ah, you needs must love, and then must wed,
And oft, alas, not wed with him you love.
For love is but for once, and evermore;
And she who weds not with her spirit-love
Forever forfeits all felicity,—
And like a flower plucked withers away.
Much lifts she him, but down he drags her more;
If base he be at last is she debased,
With nought but memory of her innocence
To show what once she was—and might have been.

The Guardian Angel hovered near this pair,
Happy her plans and hopes to see fulfilled.
Could mortal eyes a spirit-form discern
Her dream-loved youth the Maiden would have seen,
His dream-loved maid the Youth would have beheld.



The Youth's Guardian Angel.

For deep the plot this Angel had conceived
To have their spirit-loves materialize,

And then they wedded in eternal joy,—
That Heaven and earth alike might fully see
A perfect love with perfect love conjoined;
Congenial souls so thoroughly transfused,
Their thoughts and feelings all so interwove
That each was of the other but a part,
Seated in joy upon the crescent moon,
Into the fountains of their thoughts she dropped
Bright dreams and sweet, like buds of spirit-flowers,
And the effects beheld with ecstasy.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.
And far below did coo a white sea-dove.



CHAPTER VI.

The Maiden and the Youth.

PROEM.

The Sire's home among the rocks described. Under the Maiden's care the Youth soon recovers: they tell each other their histories, and the Youth relates how a hero-friend rescued his father in battle: this hero-friend was the Maid's father, but as no name was given, no comment was made, and the fact was not discovered. The Youth talks of his aspirations, and longs for the "days of old," whereat the Maid gently chides him, fearful that he might wander off in search of adventures. The Angel appears in the form of a white sea-dove.

CANTO 1.

The Maiden's Sire.

Upon his couch an old man lay. "My child,
I've waited long," he said; "why did you stay?"
She blushed and tried to speak, but words came not.
"Your old gray-headed father is a load.
Well, well! I've feared some day 'twould come to this.
Young hearts and old have no companionship.
Youth in the future lives, age in the past;
Youth feeds on fancies, age on memories.
'Oh, for the days to come, and things to be!'
Is youth's sincerest wish and only prayer.
'Oh, for the days gone by and things that were!'

Is age's ceaseless prayer and only dream."
"Oh, father, chide not so; time flew so fast.
My heart you break when aught you say unkind."
Dewlike bright tears hung trembling on each lash,
And sorrow cast its shadow on her soul.
"Forgive me, my dear child: I know you're good —
But oh, that storm and dream have made me sick.
With you around I'll soon be right again."
His long gray tangled locks he brushed aside,
And with a sigh lay back upon his couch.

In silence stood the Maid: long moments passed.
She never moved, but thought, and grieved, and planned,
And changed her plans. Her chin lay on her breast;
Closed were her eyes, and clasped her slender hands.
All statue-like she stood. To earth some spell
Seemed binding her in sleep. A smothered sigh,
The bosom's measured swell, the trickling tear,
Alone gave signs of life — so still she stood.

Up 'mong the rocks the Sire his home had made,
And furnished it with all his wants required,
Or fancy craved. Majestic 'gainst the wall
His armor stood, of shining steel complete
From head to foot; the good sword buckled tight;
The helmet on, with lofty scarlet plume,
And visor down; one hand upon the shield,
The other held upright a mighty lance.
A hero-knight the armor seemed to case,
Or else itself a thing of martial life.
The dents and scars on armor, shield and lance,
Told grimly of the wars the wearer waged.
Some books were on the shelves, and silverware,
While oaken chests with iron bands and clasps
About the corners stood, and on the floor
Huge skins of savage beasts killed in the chase.
Much else around told of the lordly state
In which somewhere one time the Sire had lived;
But nowhere was there vestige, sign, or hint,

That other lands or countries did exist,—
Or nations, kingdoms or democracies.
That isle seemed all the world, that home of rock
Its capitol, and he sole lord and king;—
And so to him they were, and he to them.

Upon that rocky island mystery
Did seem to have her viewless hermitage,
And closely veiled waved wide her mystic wand,
While breathing potent spells. Some strange event,
More strange than e'en so strange a solitude,
Seemed weirdly imminent, as though the air,
And land and sea, noted in unison
Some mighty and portentous stroke of fate.
The morning breeze, that once so merrily
Had fondled with the vines and drapery,
Now sighed amid the tops of broken trees;
The birds, still suffering from the wind and rain,
No longer merry were, but sad in look
And chirp, as though some grief was in their hearts.
A lonely insect droned a dismal note
High up the rock, that never changed nor ceased.
About the doors, the relics of the rain
Fell from the trees and overhanging cliffs
Down, drop by drop, with sound monotonous.

The sun, unheeding sea, and land, and air,
And their affairs, so multitudinous,
Had reached the hub of heaven's radiant wheel,
And glad to think his daily course half passed
Poured down a brighter glow upon the world.

CANTO 2.

The Maid Ministers to the Youth.

Upon a rock cooed soft a white sea-dove.
The Maiden oped her eyes. Bright at her feet
A beaming column stood of whitest light

And stretched its height into the firmament
Unto the sun, its gorgeous capital.
Startled she was, and gazed up at the sun
Down-pouring through a rounded aperture
Made by her Sire to mark the hour of noon.
"So late!" she said; "and he—I must be gone."

Taking a vial from a closet near
Softly she quit her father's corridor,
He yet asleep, and breathing audibly.
E'en like a butterfly she flew along
The wreck-strewn strand: bright shells and tufts of moss,
Once her delight, no longer stayed her steps.
One only thought her mind and heart did fill,
And made so swift her feet, so strong her limbs,
So bright her eyes, so like the rose her cheeks,
So like an angel she seen in a dream
Of love divine. Quickly she reached the Youth:
Beneath the shade of boughs he still did sleep,
Pale still his cheek, still sunk his marble eyes,
Still like a dead man's was his pallid brow,
Still in his hair the sand and ocean grass.
Upon her knees she sunk, and cleared his face
Of floating hair and dry sea-grass. Her heart
Beat like a wild bird 'gainst its cage's sides,
And hopes and fears were fluttering to and fro.
Feared she he'd wake, then feared he never would;
Appalled she was at thoughts of what might hap,
Or might not hap,—in case life left him not.

Her fingers' gentle touch upon his brow
A message sent down to his sleeping soul:
True love's telegraphy, that needs no wires
Save those that God has strung from heart to heart,—
Enough for thoughts of love to move upon.
Opened his eyes: a thrill shot through her soul.
To speak she tried, but knew not what to say;
Then to his ashen lips the vial put.
"Drink this," she said: he drank the vial dry,

Like one with thirst most dead. "Good mother, thanks,"
He murmured low, his eyes half-closed, his thoughts
Of her whose voice and loving ministries
Were such a solace in his childhood's days.

New strength the cordial gave: his head he raised,
And looked around. The Maid was gone, but plain
Upon the sand her slippered foot-prints shone.
"No dream is this," he mused; "and yet so strange."
The tide of life was rising in his veins.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

CANTO 3.

His Strength the Youth Regains.

She brought him food and drink: the cup he raised
Unto his lips, nor ceased to drink till all
The water he'd consumed. His heart it seemed
To cool, and new life put into his frame.

Into her eyes he gazed as lost in thought.
"Lady," he asked, "are you of flesh and blood?
You look so like the angel of my dreams."
"Yes, just a girl," she hesitating said.
"That water makes me strong," continued he.
"More real do things appear, but still you seem
More like a being of the brain, than real,
For fair as thou no mortal ever was.
Hast thou a mother?" "Once I had," she said.
That one word "mother" deep into her soul
Dived down and oped the bitter fount of grief,
Till tears o'erflowed her eyes. Her face she hid;
But echoing through her mind that word went on,
Bursting the inner doors of memory.
There shone the past, herself a fair-haired child,
Her mother's kiss, her father's words of praise,
Her little playmates and her infant joys.
Then came a gloom and mourning robes, and tears

Of broken hearts. Upon an ebon bier
An open coffin lay, wherein did sleep
Her mother, calm and pale and beautiful.
"Forgive my question, lady fair!" he said.
"Your grief I feel. A mother I, too, had,
A very saint, and beautiful as good.
For her sweet sake I God and Heaven love.
No fairer angel there, nor e'er will be,
For she perfection was in face and form,
And words and deeds of loving tenderness.
Your mother I do know was fair and good,
None other such as you could e'er have borne.
Sit on this rock, and of your mother talk,
Grief loves to hear of grief, and sorrow seeks
The sorrowful for its society."

Cooed softly overhead the white sea-dove.

By effort strong the Maid herself recalled,
Her self-possession and her dignity.
"Oh, tell me not your grief," she gently said.
"Be calm and rest, and it away will go.
From storm and wreck you still are suffering.
When strong you get your joys will all return,
And brighter then will seem the face of life."
"Oh, gentle girl, how kind and sweet your words!
To my poor grieving heart a soothing balm.
My hopes and dreams have been my happier life.
Some secrets in my heart I've kept for years:
If you will hear to you I'll tell them all —
'Tis sweet to tell one's dreams to kindly ears —
Then will I face about, and conquer grief:
E'en now within my soul another life
Is rising like a star, and shedding round
Bright beams that prophesy of better days."
"When strong you get I'll hear it all," said she;
"Not now; but sleep, and soon I will be back."
"Oh, stay not long. I'll die if long you stay;

But your sweet eyes will charm me back to life,"
He murmured, slowly laying down his head.

All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

CANTO 4.

The Maid Gives Her History.

Himself again, for all her kindnesses
The Youth most warmly thanked the blushing Maid.
"May I your name inquire, and dwelling-place?"
"My name is Margaret, but 'Margie' me
My mother called, and father calls me 'child.'
Here is my home—this island Redenfayne."
Around he gazed. "No house I see," he said,
Nor signs of human life." "My Sire and self
Alone live here!" "Upon this isle—alone?
No other home?" "None other: when a child,
Somewhere I lived in the great far-away,—
Some city 'twas, all great and glorious,
But what its name I do not surely know.
An exile here my father long has lived;
His country and his king he never names,
And questions 'bout them bids me never ask.

"The big world, far away, where I was born,
Where mother lived and died,—how bright it was!
A Paradise it seemed, its angel she.
My father rich and great with serfs and lands;
And we so happy were. But thoughts of fame
His heart beset, and took him far away.
A soldier he became, and brave deeds did
That made his name go sounding through the land.

"We all were happy, mother and myself.
To Court the Queen invited us: we went,
And oh, the splendid sights we there beheld!
Men clad in purple velvet and gold braid,

With glittering scabbards for their swords, and hilts
Studded with sparkling stones; spurs on their heels.
And on their heads helmets of blazing brass
Or shining steel with ostrich plumes for crests,
Upon their breasts badges, crosses and stars,—
How glorious they looked, how proud they seemed,
As to and fro they moved,—like very gods!

“The King’s jester my childish fancy pleased:
His painted face, and grotesque cap with ears;
A bright wand in his hand with tinkling bells,
And bells upon his cap and wrists and feet—
Oh, he was jolly, and so full of fun
I laughed my face and body out of joint:
E’en now the echoes of the merriment,
Awaken giggles I cannot repress.”
Her handkerchief upon her mouth she placed,
And blushed while striving to conceal her mirth.
“Oh, but the ladies—I must mention them:
Like goddesses, they seemed; not things of earth,
So perfectly magnificent they were:
Their countenances very beautiful;
Their eyes so brilliant and so fair their skin;
Their cheeks so rosy and their lips so red;—
And then their robes of state, of finest silks,
All trimmed with lovely laces and gold threads,
And trailing on the floor; their capes and cloaks
Of velvets, or of furs, with satins lined.
Upon their fingers loads of diamond rings,
And rings with rubies, pearls and amethysts,
And other glittering stones; upon their wrists
Bracelets most beautiful, of gold and gems;
Breastpins they wore blazoned with jewels bright,
Ear-rings whose diamonds dazzled every eye,
And chains of gold three times around the neck,
With lovely locketts worth a duke’s domain.
The daintiest satin slippers cased their feet,
Embroidered thick with many colored silks,
As though they were of brilliant blossoms made.

"The King and Queen, oh, how sublime they looked!
With glittering diadems upon their heads,
And robed in royal garb too grand for words.
The Queen around her neck had strings of pearls,
And chains of diamonds woven through her hair.
Upon the King's broad breast were many stars,
Medals, crosses, and badges of renown;
Around his waist a great red sash of silk
Whose tasselled ends reached almost to the floor.
Oh, my! 'twas all so grand. My little mind
Could not the whole take in. The hall of state
So vast, the roof so high, so wide the walls.
Such gorgeous draperies; magnificent
The paintings; splendid columns and capitals;
Carpets of velvet flowered in brightest hues.
Really I felt as though in Heaven I were.
The Queen she took my hand, my cheek she kissed;
And on my head his hand the King did place
So fatherly. Of what I saw that night
How often have I dreamed! But mother, sick
At heart, from worry o'er my father's risks,
At last broke down, the strain she could not stand.
To comfort her my father hastened home
Without the King's consent: too sick she was
To risk delay to get the King's permit.
In vain my father's love and ministry,
My mother died; and father's enemies
Desertion from the army charged on him,
And rank disloyalty, unto the King,
Who in a fit of wrath sent father here,
And stripped him of his honors and estates.
Here ten years have we lived, we two alone,—
Except a serf who in a small bateau
Goes to and fro, and keeps us well supplied:
Another tongue he speaks, and stutters so
No questions ask I 'bout the outer world.

"A little old my father has now grown:
His long gray hair still older makes him look,—

Like Aaron, or an ancient patriarch.
How unlike you, your hair so short and black,
Your beard so slight,—like his whereof I dreamed.

“Such is the story of my little life.
But God will see that justice yet is done.
And in my soul supremest faith I have,
Some day, some sweet bright day, we'll sail away
To our old home, my father's wrongs redressed,
His lands and serfs and titles all restored,
And we, welcomed and honored by the King,
At Court again appear in royal state,
Happy as saints when crowned in Paradise.”

CANTO 5.

The Youth Gives His History.

“Now that I've told you who my father is,
Whatever of your parents and yourself
You choose to tell, I'll dearly love to hear.”

Cooed softly overhead the white sea-dove.

Thanking the Maiden for her history,
And joining in her hope that her brave Sire
Would re-instatement get, thus spoke the Youth:
“Legion of Shonbirg Hall, my father was —
Legion's a family name, given because
In time of war our great progenitor
Equalled a legion, all within himself.

“My father in his noble birth took pride,
And anxious was to prove a worthy son.
Where royalty did bloom he loved to be,
Where kings and queens, princes, barons and lords,
And all their retinues, were most displayed.
His aspiration was to win renown,
And on his breast medals and stars to wear,
Crosses and other decorations bright,

As evidence of glorious triumphs won.
Ambition's fires burned in my father's brain,
And flamed, as on an altar, in his heart.



The Youth's Sire and Mother.

"When o'er the land the tramp of war was blown,
When to the breeze our flag was high unfurled,
When everywhere the heralds of the King

Proclaimed that war was on, and patriots called
To rally 'round the flag of father-land,
To make response my father was the first,—
All Legion-like. I seem to see him now
Upon his steed, amid the martial throng:
A king he looked, caparisoned for war.
His helmet shining on his lofty head
With streaming plume as red as human blood.
His coat of mail fitting his rounded form
As though of nature's growth; his breastplate bright,
Inlaid with burnished brass, blazed like a sun;
Upon his hands gauntlets of steel and wire;
A great sword at his side; upon one arm
A shining shield of many metals made,
And in his hand a lance with streaming flag.
The steed he strode, in showy armor clad,
With gaudy trappings full caparisoned,
Champed on his bit, oft fiercely bowed his head,
Pawed at the earth, and neighed and curvetted,
As if elated by his armature.

"And all around were men in armor clad,
With battle-axes armed, and swords and spears,
Mounted on horses some, and some on foot,
With banners waving, and the beat of drums,
While now and then was blown a trumpet blast.
His hand my father waved in last adieu
Unto my mother and myself, as by
He rode amid his gorgeous cavalcade,
We from an upper window looking on.

"My mother—oh, a very saint was she;
And just as fair of face as good of heart.
My father she did love with perfect love,
And ne'er was happy save when he was near.
Oh, how at nights on bended knees she prayed
For his salvation and his happiness;
And me in early infancy she taught
Down by her side to kneel, and pray for him.

She tried his heart to turn to deeds of peace
That would the welfare of the world promote,—
Deeds that would help the poor and those distressed.
The gospel of humility she talked,
Told of the lowly works that Jesus did,
And how through him the world had all been blessed.
He listened, but reply he'd never make,
And when she ceased he'd kiss her and retire,—
So good and loving was he to us both.
He thought that he somehow a mission had,
Decreed by fate that he was bound to fill,
And so he joined the army for the war,
As sire and grandsires had before him done.

“One day came news a battle had been fought,
The victory ours, but many thousands slain.
Great was the fame my father did achieve
By valiant deeds upon the battle-field;
But fearless utterly took risks too great,
And overpowered was by ten to one.
Covered with wounds he fought unto the last,
Scorning to yield. A friend, a hero-friend,
With mighty strength and valor rescued him—”
The Maiden started and surprised did look,
As though about to speak. The Youth paused not.
“And nursed him till he died. A holy priest
Extreme unction to him administered,
And buried him in consecrated ground.
A lofty monument the King has reared,
Commemorative of my father's fame,
And thereon placed a glowing eulogy.

“But nothing could my mother's grief assuage;
Paler and paler grew her lovely cheeks.
With tears her gentle eyes seemed ever filled,
And day by day more feeble grew her voice.
Out of her sight she would not let me go,
But in my face would gaze with many tears,
Then kiss me hard, and hug me to her breast:

My father's face and eyes she said I had,
And in me thought his image she did have.

"At last my mother died, broke was her heart.
On her death-bed a chain of gold she took,
That held a locket, covered thick with pearls,
And hung it 'round my neck: right here it is.
My father's portrait and her own it holds,
Which ever since her wedding-day she'd worn,—
His bridal gift." The Youth here from his breast
Drew forth the chain and locket pearl-embossed:
A moment on their portraits dear he gazed,
Then turned away his face his tears to hide —
His grief too sacred for another's eyes.
Recovering soon, his story he resumed.
"After my mother's death, in Shonbirg Hall,
Our home, an orphan boy I wandered 'round,
Nore but a tutor for my company.
My father's fame and mighty deeds in war
My only thoughts by day and dreams by night;
And every page that of his valor told
With eagerness I read; and when at times
Some soldier would to me of father talk
Close to his side I'd cling, and with my eyes
Glued to his face, enraptured, all his words
My ears devoured, and ever afterward
That soldier I did love and reverence."

CANTO 6.

The Youth Speaks of His Aspirations.

Wiping away a tear he hurried on:
"Thus smitten by the love of chivalry,
The thrilling pages of romance I read,
Of Arthur and his knights of Table Round;
Sir Lancelot, the brave; Sir Gallahad,
The pure of heart; and Caradoc, the good,
Famed for his faithful wife; and all that throng

Of heroes, brave and true and chivalrous.
Stories I read of mighty Charlemagne,
And his array of gallant paladins,
Roland, the brave and strong; Ogier, the Dane;
And great Rinaldo, who but fame did crave.
While yet a boy I longed to be a knight
Like Gallahad, with sword like Roland's keen;
A shield like Rogero's that none could face,
Helmet and mail and horse like Charlemagne's;
And thus equipped go charging on the foe,
Some glorious cause grandly to vindicate,
Or from abuse rescue some lady fair."

The Maid, whose eyes were fixed upon his face,
As loving magnet on the Polar star,
And who amid his narrative scarce breathed,
Such was the spell he and his words had wrought,
A long-drawn sigh here heaved, and tear-drops formed
Around her drooping lids, she wondering
If she somehow could be that "lady fair."

A white sea-dove cooed softly overhead.

Having his history thus pictured forth,
His lofty aspirations next he told,
His dreams of glory and of deathless fame;
And then, in lower tones and softer voice,
Described his spirit-love, and all her worth
And loveliness; his night sail on the sea,
His love's descent upon a starry beam,
Their ecstasies of bliss. "Enchanting dream!"
Exclaimed the Maid, and sighed as though in pain.
"Oh, call it not a dream!" quickly he said;
"But Heaven-life. To flesh and blood a dream,
But to the soul divine reality.
Oh, that was living! Flesh forbids such life,
The life of love in love's own blessed land,
No time, no change, no pain, no flesh to feed;
But ever blooming youth, and melodies

Divine; no cravings, no satiety,
But one unchanging ecstasy of bliss."

Again she sighed, again her tears peeped forth.
"But oh, that awful storm!" continued he;
As though to Hell both land and sea had dropped.
I cried—the thunders swallowed every word.
Around I looked—nought but infernal fiends,
And monsters huge as earth and horrible as hell.
For help I shrieked—but made no sound I heard:
The storm was all in all, and nought was I,
Wrecked was my boat, and death oped wide his mouth.
What demon nightmare agonies I felt!
My half-dead frame some ocean-giant seized
And flung me on the shore with sand and grass.
Loud howled the sea for its lost prey, and oft
Its hands reached forth to drag me to its maw.
Gone was all hope, no wish nor care I had—
Except to slumber on, eternally,—
And had you never come I'd never waked."

All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.
That Angel was at work: *so read the Leaves.*

So oft of fame the Youth did talk, so oft
For "days of old and fairy-land" he sighed,
And for the "golden days of chivalry."
The Maid felt some alarm, and thus did chide:
"Long not for 'days of old and fairy-land,'
For then men were barbarians, almost brutes,
Knowing no culture nor society.
No fairies then, but in distorted minds,
Or in the fancies of the whimsical.
And for the 'golden days of chivalry,'
Pray not. True, many noble knights there were,—
Had you then lived no doubt a knight you'd been,
Mounted on fiery horse, armed cap-a-pie,
Protecting beauty and defending right;
But oh, all full of outlaws was the earth,
Who lovely ladies fought for as their prey;

No thought of love, or gracious courtesy,
But brutal force and selfish will prevailed.
Far better, Legion, are these gentler days,
And happier far is peaceful Redenfayn."

All softly cooed o'erhead the white sea-dove.



CHAPTER VII.

Sympathy Develops into Love.

PROEM.

The Maid neglects to ask the name of the hero-friend who had rescued and nursed the Youth's sire, though struck by the deed: hence all the woe that followed. She and the Youth in sympathy: he conceals his affection, but hers is open and unrestrained. From a high cliff they watch the moonlit sea for hours without either saying a word, or doing any act indicative of love, yet each intensely loving the other. That night she mused most affectionately about him, and dreamed he was in love with her. The Guardian Angel was working out her plans.—Here a *Chasm* appeared in the poem, and a warning to read no more—unless grief was desired, that the balance of the poem was on *Laurel Leaves* and told of woe, so had been thrown over the walls of Paradise, and was hanging on Hell's gate.

CANTO 1.

The Maid and the Youth in Close Companionship.

Struck by the deed of him who'd saved from death
The Youth's brave father on the battle-field,
Questions she would have asked concerning him,
But so entrancing was the narrative
Unused passed by the opportunity.

Had she those questions asked, oh, what a world
Would she have saved of sorrow and of pain!
Alas, how small a cog left out will make
Our clock of destiny such false time keep!
How oft unknown are opportunities
Until they've passed us by and gone from reach!
And when once gone how seldom they return!

The Maid and Youth by fate together thrown
Like twins they were in fond companionship.
They rambled 'mong the rocks, and on the cliffs:
Each shaded niche she showed, and screened recess,
Each vine-clad bower and labyrinthine walk,
Where she her childhood's days had whiled away,
And early maidenhood; shells of the sea,
And pebbles smooth and bright, all intermixed
With other shiny debris of the sea,
Her playthings and her sole companions.
Oh, what a perfect joy to her it was
Some toy to show more treasured than the rest,
And all its little history relate,
To one who was in tender sympathy!

How greedily he feasted on her words,
Her tones, her happy looks, and artless ways;
His eyes and ears and heart and soul and mind
Wrapped up in her, and in her narratives,
As though held bound by some enchantment strong.
How she was robed, and what her ornaments,
Whether of homespun or of silk her dress,
Whether she necklace wore, or chain of gold,
Bracelets, breastpin or rings, he noticed not;
For so her garb with her did harmonize
They all that dear thing made which was herself,—
Of which her face the perfect blossom was,
And so did fascinate nought else he saw.

At woman's face alone man looks at first,
And in it reads of Heaven, earth, or Hell.
Her veil of flesh his insight pierces through

Into her soul beyond, and there beholds
What him attracts, repels, or fascinates:
So stands he still, or flees, or her adores.
Not till his worship's o'er does he descend
To earth and circumstance, and view her round,
Her mind, her manners, garb and daily speech,
Her little ways, her temper and her songs,
Her thoughtful love, kind deeds and modesty:
These then must hold him, or he'll turn away.
So perfect seemed the maid, so full of grace
And loveliness, so sweet of face and speech,
So guileless, gentle, full of tender ways.
The Youth could hardly deem her human born.
Nature's own child she was in artlessness;
As open as the daisy's was her heart;
Her words as truthful as the sea-dove's coo;
No morn in May more sincere than her smile;
As pure as dew-drops in a rose her thoughts;
And from her soul welled forth her sentiments
As waters sweet from forth a crystal fount.
Oh, saintly as a lily was this Maid,
And something of the angel compassed her.
E'en Sin, himself, in awe would pass her by,
The awful contrast quite confounding him.

Her words seemed born of light wedded to sound,
And when she talked attention was entranced,
So nought but listen could he do who heard:
No Siren's voice was ever half so sweet.
But when she laughed, and laugh she often did,
Her laughter seemed some trilling melody
Whose echoes conjured up within the soul
A gleeful ecstasy, a jubilee,
The which once heard the heart did fascinate,
And memory hugged with thrills ineffable.

No playmate, girl nor boy, nor bird nor beast,
The Maiden had, and oft she'd deeply grieved
That none there was her little joys to share,
To listen to her words and make reply.

Men have been hermits, and the life have loved;
But woman's heart longs for companionship,
And to her loneliness is agony.
The rivulet by nature seeks the sea,
The needle turns by impulse to the pole,
Perpetually the planets near the sun,
By instinct flies the pigeon to its home,
The mother's thought tends ever to her babe,
The love of Christ is always on his Church.
So woman's soul goes forth in search of love,
And without love is never satisfied.
But when true love's once anchored in her heart
'Tis anchored there for aye and evermore,
E'en though the one beloved basely betray,
And others worthy worship at her shrine,
And bathe her altar with a lifetime's tears:
Once having loved, again she cannot love.

Little the work the Guardian Angel had:
The Youth and Maid each in the other saw
The realized ideal they adored;
And so in unison their sympathies
Each seemed the other's heart and soul to have.
His former self the Youth no longer was,—
Transfigured by the Angel and the Maid.
No longer loved he all alone to stroll;
No longer gazed he at the stars, and sighed;
No longer came in dreams his spirit-love;
No longer fancy painted Eden-scenes;
No longer did his brain his kingdom make.
The island Maid to him was all in all;
Her eyes did hold his heart as with a chain;
Her smile within his soul woke ecstasies;
Her face the star to which his thoughts e'er turned;
Her voice the only music he did love;
Her self the sum and substance of all bliss,
And elsewhere nought of beauty, love or truth;
She was his idol, he idolater.

Here into song the *Myrtle Leaves* thus bloomed:

The Mystic Pair.

Nought in itself is quite complete
However fair and good,



For every Maid a Youth.

But somewhere something is that's meet
To make it all it should.

No independent thing respires
In earth or sea or sky:
Each thing some other thing requires
To work its destiny.

All that has life is made in pairs,
No unpaired thing is bred,
Save nondescripts that leave no heirs,
And those whose mates are dead.

'Tis land and sea, 'tis earth and sky,
'Tis mountain and its vale;
'Tis sound and ear, 'tis light and eye,
'Tis female and her male.

All pairs are tied by mystic threads
Our mother nature makes,
But love's the silken cord that weds
True hearts, and never breaks.

For every flower there is a bee,
For every soul a truth,
For every he there is a she,
For every maid a youth.

The charm of love all hates and harms
Binds by its mighty spell;
If love persists no evil charms
Can Heaven change to Hell.

CANTO 2.

The Youth Conceals His Love.

The rose-bud's born its beauties to unfold
When to its core the sunshine warm doth reach,
So youthful hearts when touched by tender smiles
Their doors ope wide and bid love enter in.

Throwing around his mystic spells that blind
Love came with stealthy step, as is his wont,
And on her heart in letters bright and deep
Wrote Legion's name, never to be effaced.

So on his heart her dear name he inscribed
In characters as deep if not so plain.

When maidens love their acts do oft betray;
So Margie's every word and look was love,—
Love deep and pure and sweet as honey dew
Within the lily's virgin heart at morn.
But in his acts and words there was reserve,
And nought he did or said avowal made;
For well in mind his lineage he kept,
And that high honor for his rule he'd set.
An exile's child was she, in schools untrained;
A Legion he, almost of royal blood,
And in his bosom aspirations high.
With her his bride forfeit he surely would
His King's regard, and stand at Court disgraced,
Which to a Legion was far worse than death.

When was the time, or where this lonely isle,
Is nought, for not of time nor place is love,
But evermore and everywhere the same.
Herein is pictured forth a love divine,
The love the Guardian Angel bore the Youth,
A love that gladly giveth up its all,
And self doth sacrifice, that happy he
In other arms might sleep: *so read the Leaves.*
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

'Twas night: asleep were all the restless winds;
The moon sat happy in her star-gemmed hall,
And in her smiles the great wide world rejoiced.
Upon the sea a pensive calmness lay,
The silent trees seemed nodding in their sleep,
The sea-birds rested by their dreaming mates,
The fish were in their caves, or grassy grotts,
E'en restless sea-lions seemed in full repose;
And solemn silence dwelt on land and sea.
High on a cliff the Youth and Maiden sat,

He at her feet. Below the ocean lay,
So still, so grand, so vast, so beautiful.
The little isle seemed floating in the air;
And like a dream of time's eternal tide
Unending stretched afar the wide, wide sea.
A time and place it was for love's young bud
To start and grow and blossom and bear fruit:
There were the moon and stars, a lonely isle,
A seat beside the sea, two youthful hearts,
And no intruders near, man, bird nor beast.
Love's most at home where only two abide.

Each looked upon the scene all silently;
But little did they see, for sight is not
Of eyes alone, but eyes and mind allied,
And neither's mind was looking through their eyes.
Their thoughts were in each other all absorbed,
And this absorption was their happiness;
Nor sight, nor speech, nor touch was requisite.
Love when intense exhales a mystic power
That does pervade a loving soul when near,
And generates a placid pleasure there,
Which a true loving heart doth satisfy,—
Without the pressure of the hand or arm,
Or tender word low whispered in the ear,
Or lips laid soft on lips that make response:
These are the actions of the animal.
When still the tongue of love, thought talks to thought
Within the secret chambers of the soul.
Long thus they sat, and looked, and thought, and loved;
But no word spake, and touched not hand nor cheek,
Each happy that the other was so near:
Such is the force of love's own effluence
When pure the mind and heart, and love sincere.
'Tis true awhile in reverence he held
A dangling end of her loose scarf that fell
Upon his arm; but felt remorse for this.

Then down the distant sky a meteor fell,
Bursting far out upon the ocean's edge.
They both uprose thereat, their steps retraced,
And where their paths did part they timidly
Shook hands, and softly said: "Good night, good night!"

And overhead cooed low a white sea-dove.

That meteor's flash somehow seemed ominous:
Did it for them prefigure agony?
Alas, how perilous the stream of love,
And how oft wrecked the hearts that sail thereon,
When bright the sky, tranquil the wind and tide:
Such are its eddies, shoals and sunken rocks.

CANTO 3.

The Maid Muses About the Youth.

Entering her room the Maid lit every lamp.
"So happy feel I that I want things bright,"
She said, her eyes and cheeks aglow with joy.

Most strange that room, indeed, when lamps were lit.
Three columns of fantastic shapes upheld
A dome encrusted thick with glittering stars
Of selenite. With shadowy scenery
And most fantastic shapes its limestone walls
Were lavishly adorned in picturesque.
Stalactites hung like brilliant chandeliers
From ceilings frescoed well by nature's hands.
A palace cave wrought for some fairy queen
Of mystery in the long ago, it seemed,
With touches here and there of human skill.
Two windows pierced the walls, one towards the sea,
And through it shone afar the moonlit world.
Furnished this room with couches, tables, chairs,
Curtains and carpets, mirrors and drapery,
And all the many requisites of ease,

And luxury, a lady's heart to charm.
In such a room, amid such brilliancy,
More brilliant made by her bewitching self,
Her form, her dress, her face and glittering eyes,
The queen she of the splendid spectacle,
Whose brightness much the mirrors multiplied.

Of love and joy and him were all her thoughts.
Such happiness before she'd never known.
Oh, it was Heaven to her virgin heart,
So exquisite, so full of perfect bliss.
A revelation 'twas of her own self—
How like a harp her heart, silent till touched
By love's soft finger tips, then pouring forth
Music made up of pure felicities.
"So gentle he, so full of tenderness;
How lovingly her scarf he did caress;
What rapture seemed upon his face enthroned
When he upgazed! How full of sympathy!
So much like her's his tastes! Romantic, too,
His history: by ocean's billows brought,
And tempests blown;—and at her feet laid down.
Sure he for her was destined by the fates,
And destined to be his therefore was she.
Light blue his eyes: she always fancied blue;
And then so true and lovingly they shone!
His hands and feet how shapely and how small;
Slender his fingers, pink his nails and round.
Somewhere she'd read, or heard, or thought or dreamed,
These sure signs were a man was gentle born,
And had like one of noble blood been raised"—
(In maidens' minds ever a potent point.)
"His mouth so comely, and so white his teeth,
And strong and regular; so sweet his breath."
Just here she sighed at thought how sweet must be
A kiss of love from one so fair and dear.
"White and serene his forehead high, crowned thick
With curling hair, black as a raven's wing;
His smiles so sunny, and so gay his laugh."

Thus on she mused, as she her form disrobed.
Oh, in her eyes, he more than perfect shone,—
Adonis not more fair in Venus' sight
When for him she did pray to Jupiter,
And weep for fear to her he might be lost.
The fineness of his clothes she noted, too;
With frogs his coat was fastened; his cravat
Was silk and flowing large, with bright threads hemmed;
His shirt embroidered, and of lace his cuffs;
Adorned with silken flowers were his socks,
Fine were his shoes, with silver buckles clasped;
Upon his finger shone a ring of gold,
The letter "L" deep graven in its seal.
All these deemed she sure badges of renown,
And proved the Youth a high-born personage:
Hence were her heart and fancy greatly pleased,
For wealth and rank have charms in women's eyes.

CANTO 4.

The Maid's Dream of Love.

Thus musing to her bed retired the Maid;
And as in slumber's soft embrace she sunk
Into her happy heart a sweet wish came
That she by him might sometime be possessed,
Wholly engrossed and all monopolized,
As by the sea when she therein did bathe.

And as she slept all gently came a dream
That opened wide the gate of Paradise.
Nought there she saw but what was beautiful.
Bright were the skies, and all serene the seas;
With greenest grass the earth was carpeted,
And everywhere the fairest flowers bloomed;
With sweetest melodies the air did thrill,
And 'mong the trees were flitting lovely birds:
Mated were some, and building secret nests.
Two swans she saw caressing in their love,

Bosom to bosom pressed, their necks entwined,
In joy raising their wings and piping loud,
While tender transports glittered in their eyes.
Cooed overhead, two sea-doves, white as snow,
Perched side by side, in touch their heads and beaks,
Their ruby eyes bright twinkling with delight.
Then came the Youth; for joy she almost swooned.
All humbly at her feet he gently kneeled,
And at her face gazed up adoringly,
E'en in her dream she blushed, but not away
Her face did turn; for sweet to her his gaze,
And thrilled her through with ecstasy divine.
No word he said, no smile, nor touch of hand,
But bending low her garment's hem he kissed—
And then was gone. A sigh she gave, and slept
As in a trance of bliss until the morn.

Up with the sun in beauty rose the Maid,
And from her wardrobe chose her richest dress,—
Her mother's once,—and all her finery,
Rings, breastpin, bracelets and a chain of gold,
And royally did she herself array;
Musing the while of him and her sweet dream,
Her heart with joy athrob, her soul alive
With bright expectancies and happy hopes,
Such as do thrill a maid upon her bridal morn.

Beside her window cooed a white sea-dove.

* * * * *

Here ended short the mystic *Myrtle Leaves*;
But written on some cypress leaves attached,
In penmanship and ink quite different,
Were characters the Scribe translated thus:

The Chasm in the Wreath.

The chasm's reached: beyond—oh seek it not!
Here Paradise, there Pandemonium.
Ope memory's door, and dwell therein with joy.
Chain fancy down: with grief the future's dark.

Why venture where rueful and rough the road?
Fate for the Maid a bitter cup has filled:
What angel longs to weep? The Youth's career




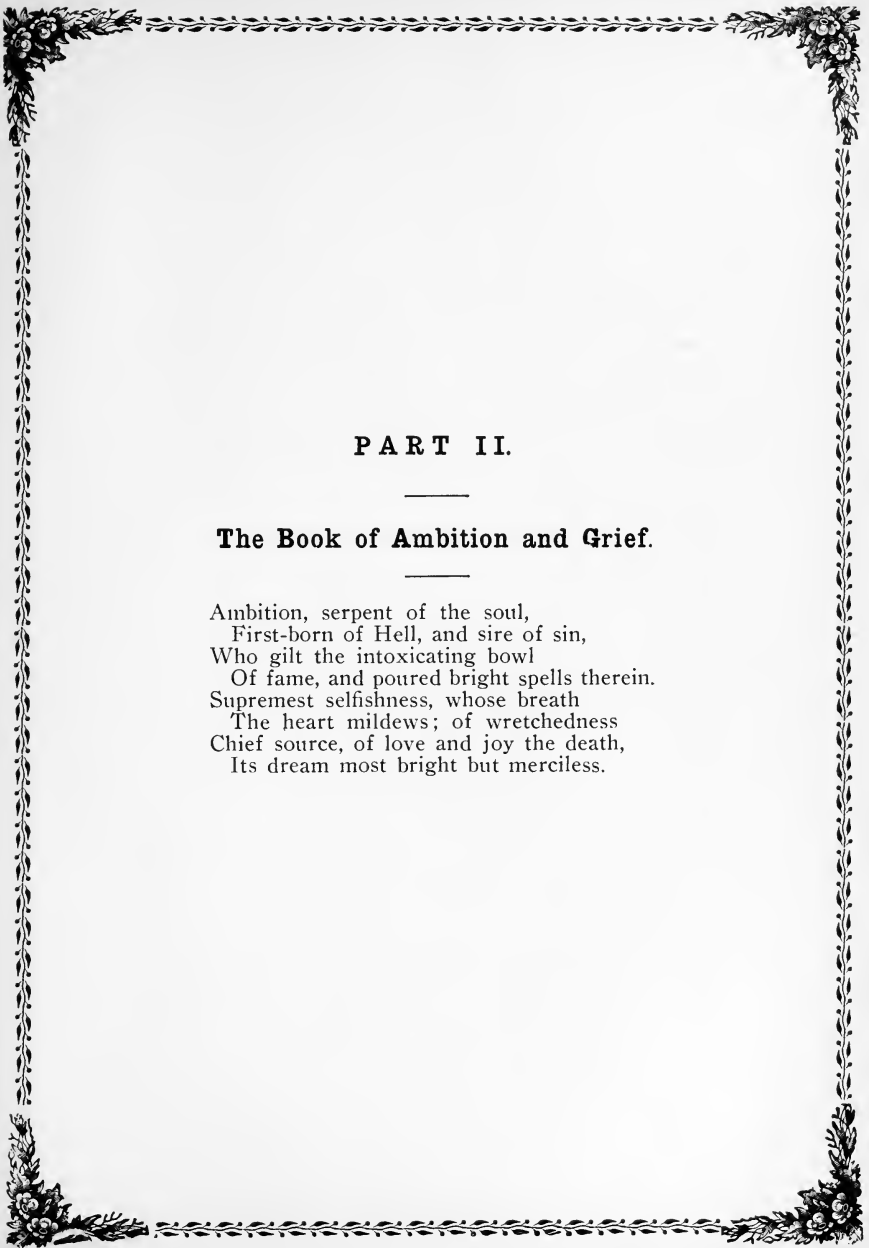
The Spirit of the Chasm.

Was hope-fed agony: who longs for gloom?
Love to the gates of Paradise doth lead,
For love's both holiness and ecstasy.

Ambition lures to Pandemonium,
For woe and selfishness ambition is.
The chasm's reached: here love, ambition there:
Who seeks beyond must seek the gate of Hell,
The *Laurel Wreath* must read that's hung thereon,
For thither out of Paradise 'twas cast.

Read not beyond this page, but close the book,
And go thy way. Enough of woe thou'lt have
In thine own life, so need'st not borrow hence.
Alas, alas, a pang why should there be?
Why should with grief and woes young hearts be pierced?
And why should love, life's sweetest, brightest draught,
So often be denied? or mixed with grief?
Ever 'twas thus, and thus ever must be.
With tears is oiled the heart's machinery,
And all its cogs have blood for lubricants.
Whate'er of perfect bliss we see or wish
Is in a dream, or else like Dead Sea fruit.
So read no more, but turn thee quickly hence:
That curse of Willowdale its wrath doth work.



A decorative border of leaves and flowers surrounds the page.

PART II.

The Book of Ambition and Grief.

Ambition, serpent of the soul,
First-born of Hell, and sire of sin,
Who gilt the intoxicating bowl
Of fame, and poured bright spells therein.
Supremest selfishness, whose breath
The heart mildews; of wretchedness
Chief source, of love and joy the death,
Its dream most bright but merciless.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Scribe's Search for the Laurel Wreath.

PROEM.

While realizing that the *Laurel Leaves* told of woe, and that it appeared impossible for him ever to read them, nevertheless the Scribe had an intense yearning for their contents, and was anxious to incur any risks in searching for them. While musing hereon at eve he came across a maiden's grave, and was sorrow-stricken at her epitaph. Suddenly a giant appeared, and opened the way to Hell. Down both went; and there amid the most appalling sights and sounds, and through the awfulest dangers, the giant reached Hell's gate, seized the *Laurel Wreath*, escaped the clutches of the diabolical monster on guard, and brought the Wreath away, aided as he was by a divine phylactery. The Scribe then read the contents of the Leaves, and thus satiated his cravings.

CANTO 1.

The Scribe's Musings and Meanderings.

In somber robes, silent her steps and slow,
Down-hearted eve, with many a tear and moan,
Searched every vale and plain, forest and glade,
To find some trace of her dear sire—the sun;
But ever he avoided her sad eyes
Which ceaselessly bedewed the grass and flowers

With their pure tears. Bright hope and pale despair,
Like light and shade, struggled her cheeks to rule,
As through some vale lingering rays she saw
Of him she sought. While following near behind
Her mother night searched for her wandering child.
Close in the footsteps of down-hearted eve,
Within a lonely vale the Scribe did stroll,
While through his mind roamed thoughts of love and fame.
With eyes downcast, and fingers interlocked,
This world he bade adieu, and fancy-winged
Unto the ocean-isle flew far away,—
To Redenfayn, the Maiden and the Youth;
He greatly wondering what lay beyond
That dreadful "*Chasm*" angels cared not to cross.
To look beyond his spirit's eyes strove hard,
But Mystery's viewless realm enveloped all.
Nought could he see but walls intangible,—
One dim and universal nothingness.

"*The Chasm's reached: beyond — oh, seek it not!
Who seeks beyond must seek the gate of Hell,*"
Strange words, thought he, and darker grew his soul,
Longing to tread where mortal never trod,
Longing to read what angels dared not read.
"*Chain fancy down!*" What slave can chain his lord?
Fancy! cunning artist thou. Drear this earth
Beside thy Edens, made with skill divine
From Memory's chaos,—islands, birds and flowers,
Sunshine, eternal youth, a lovely bride,
Love unending, and joys that never wane.
Oh, for the days of old, and fairy-land!
Oh, for our Paradise all realized!

Thoughts of the *Laurel Wreath* drove other thoughts
From the Scribe's mind away: its mystery,
Like an enchanter's wand, bound all his soul.
The more he pondered 'bout the sundered Wreath
The more to read its mystic words he yearned.
For some relief he prayed, nor did he care

What path his feet might tread, what canyon deep,
Or cavern vast, what demons he might meet,
What dangers undergo, so that Hell's gate
Was reached, whereon did hang that *Laurel Wreath*
Torn from its myrtle mate by angel hands,
And o'er the walls of Paradise far cast
Down, down forever to the gate of Hell.

A lonely grave the Scribe's meanderings stayed.
The trees around in silence hung their heads;
Its brow the willow laid in tender grief
Against the cypress' cheek, and sighed and moaned,
While every leaf in sympathy dropped tears.
A turtle dove cooed low and mournfully;
All motionless the air, by sorrow chained;
A little rill was softly whimpering near:
With some great grief all nature seemed weighed down.
A rose-bud crushed the little tombstone bore,
And these sad words: "*Sixteen and broken-hearted.*"
When read he this the Scribe bent low, and wept
That broken-hearted one so young should die.

While thus with grief and love his heart was soft,
Uprose before him Yndafrene, the fair;
And her sweet smile did so entrance his soul
That all else in the world he quite forgot.
Low at her feet he kneeled in homage true,
The while her spirit's virtue shed around
Sweet influences, like to Paradise.

CANTO 2.

The Scribe's Descent to Hell.

The *Laurel Wreath* at last his thoughts reclaimed,
And he resolved, in spite of death and Hell,
That Wreath to find, and read its mystic words.
Just then a giant at his side appeared.
(Thus a fixed purpose, like Aladdin's lamp,
Some power awakes to help us work our will.)

The giant stamped — and wide the earth unclosed.
Noiseless they sped, adown a gloomy shaft,
Into a cavern wide and dark and deep.



Yndafrene seen in a Vision.

Slowly dull-sounding ooze the huge rocks dripped
Upon the mouldy floor. Within each niche
Reposed a fleshless skull, and in each skull

A bloated toad with phosphor eyes that made
More grim the gloom; while to and from each skull
In seeming glee danced headless skeletons,—
A ghastly spectacle. Key-stones and shafts
Of noblest form, and whitest marble made,
Lay shattered near; and on their parts were graved
“Religion,” “Law,” “Love,” “Peace” and “Liberty,”—
Five words that Hell doth most of all detest.
Just then the Scribe through all his bones felt chills,
Till shook his limbs and chattered all his teeth.
His blood he felt grow cold, his face grow pale,
And horror seized his soul. His eyes he strained
To see what caused his deadly fearfulness,—
When lo, passed through the cave a monstrous shape:
Crooked and huge, many its limbs, misjoined
And disproportionate, astoundingly;
And o’er them hung, in many dangling folds,
A swarthy hide: no flesh seemed on its bones,—
But one prodigious skin-clad skeleton.
A hueless glimmer compassed it around,
Its huge ribs rattled and its hip-bones creaked.
No head appeared; but in the ebon mass
A monstrous opening like a ravening mouth,
And saffron lights, like angry tiger’s eyes
In jungle dark; and once shook in the gloom
Two tortuous things, like horns, or tails, or tongues.
With long-drawn growl the monster passed from sight,
Or else was by the darkness swallowed up.

A flickering glare the skulls now all put forth,
The toads turned round, and each gave forth a croak.
In fear the Scribe looked ’round: gone was his guide.
Its ghastly jaws each fleshless skull oped wide,
And all the toads loud croaked, “Beware! Beware!”
He would have fled, but where to go knew not,
E’en had his knees the strength to bear him up.

CANTO 3.

The Laurel Wreath Found and Seized.

The darkness seemed to fade: his guide had come,
Within his hand a lantern grim and strange,—
A human skull filled with a bloated toad
That through its eyes a phosphor light poured forth.
“Oh, God, what awful agony!” he cried.
“That goblin-ghost that guards the gate of Hell!
The *Wreath* I’d seized, when, oh, his yellow eyes
Glared through my very soul. A rush I made,
And here I am, but oh, sick unto death—
Could an immortal die. The ghost—his eyes!
Oh-h, how into my very life they burned!”
Upon the Scribe’s right arm his head he laid,
And gave a groan that seemed his very soul
To carry off—so great his anguish was.

Then came a hiss, with rumbling sounds inmixed.
“Great God, it comes! We must away,” he cried,
“The *Wreath* is missed: I have it in my hand.”
A prayer he breathed, and at the ghost he hurled
His lantern-skull. Up through the gloom they sped,
But deep below they heard an awful roar
Of utter rage, mixed with a fierce despair.
The goblin-fiend had found himself outdone,
And with impunity the gate of Hell
Had been by force invaded and profaned!

“This *Wreath* you longed to read,” remarked the guide,
“An Angel bid me come, and aid extend.
The gate of Hell we’ve braved this *Wreath* to gain,
Thrown o’er the lofty walls of Paradise,
Because for angel hearts too sorrowful.
The lantern-skulls within that dismal cave,
Hell’s vestibule, alone to Hell’s strong gate
Reveal the way. Climbing up to its niche
A lantern-skull I seized, and darted out.
Just then the fiend suspicioning came in.

While here he was the gate of Hell I reached,
And snatched the *Wreath* away. 'Beware! beware!'
Croaked loud my lantern-toad, and ceased to shine.
The goblin-ghost rushed back with rattling bones;
My legs those headless skeletons did seize;
Each swore the skull was his, and while for it
They fiercely strove, my legs I quickly freed.
The goblin-fiend, that guards the gate of Hell,
Growled out 'Beware!' and to and fro did strike
Most viciously, with hoofs and horns and tails;
His awful mouth he oped to swallow me,
And in my soul buried his yellow eyes.
A rush I made—and nothing more did know
Until with you myself I found again,
That toad-filled skull and *Wreath* within my hands.
My guide and guard that Angel must have been,—
Else this phylactery. "The Scribe looked up,
And shining on the guide's right arm he read:
*"I am, all God; Thou art, all Christ; He is,
All Holy Ghost: Jehovah, Three in one."*
Then bowed the Scribe his knees, and crossed his heart.

CANTO 4.

The Gate of Hell.

His thrilling narrative the guide resumed:
"Most awful looked Hell's gate, of iron built
And adamant, lofty and wide, and barred
With mighty bolts. Its only ornament
A broken cross reversed: from one arm hung
A bleeding lamb, torn by a wicked wolf,
Showing how Satan's imps the holy saints
Do persecute; the other arm bore up
A fierce-eyed goat, symbol of lust and greed.
Upon that broken cross appeared a word
All bright with holy hopes unrealized,
And most devout intents never fulfilled,—

A word with angel's face but devil's heart,—
'To-morrow.' The most witching word of woe!
That *ignis fatuus* word, e'en on Hell's gate,
Looked like an honest friend. That word, beware;
All writ in holy hopes, and pure intents;
For all the sons of men, in every age,
Of every race, in every land and clime,
To God propose to give their hearts to-morrow;
But ah, when that to-morrow comes, next day
To-morrow is,—so all to-morrow is
This side the grave, this side eternity.
The foulest souls in Hell's most foul abyss,
In Paradise would now be blessed saints
Had not to-morrow stole their pious thoughts,
While frail to-day their hearts to sin seduced,
By promising high-minded deeds to-morrow.
And thus between to-morrow and to-day
Vibrates the soul, till life's machine wears out
And drops it in the grave. Beware to-morrow!
Now I the words upon this *Laurel Wreath*
Will read. While bitter they to angels' hearts,
Lessons of truth to erring men they teach."

Long read the guide, careful no word to miss,
Nor picture, sign, nor trope to overlook,—
And when the end he reached the Scribe looked up—
And lo, he was awake, and all alone,
Reclining on the maiden's lonely grave.
There was that brief pathetic epitaph:
"Sixteen and broken-hearted;" deep engraved:
Above these words of woe, that rose-bud crushed.
Gone dark-faced eve, gone her black mother night,
And in the east the cock proclaimed the day.
Who seeks the pleasure sad of sighs and tears,
Inmixed with joys, and scenes of the Abyss,
Will find herein what from the *Laurel Leaves*
The guide did read, with all his homilies,
Marred by the Scribe's imperfect memory,

And mingled oft with his imaginings.
But when herein ambition is rebuked,
Or right is praised, or wrong is stigmatized,
Or fame accused, or sympathy for love
Or truth expressed, such words are but the Scribe's
Own utterance, or else from *Myrtle Leaves*
Loosed from the Wreath ere cast from Paradise.
Upon the *Laurel Leaves* no word nor sign
A devil to offend, but they of sin
So horribly did reek, forced was the Scribe
Their heinous viciousness to mitigate,
So mortal ears would hear without revolt.



CHAPTER IX.

The Struggle Between Love and Ambition.

PROEM.

The Youth, while confessing to himself his passionate love for the Maid, realizes that, she being an exile's daughter, to marry her would bar his way to fame. He soliloquizes about his duty to his name and station, his aspirations to prove worthy of his father, and his intense longing for fame, honor and glory. He finds a stranded boat, with fame for its figure-head, and believes it is a call upon him to leave the island, and begin his quest for fame. Ambition characterized and reprobated.

CANTO 1.

The Youth's Deep Love and High Resolves.

Upon the cliff that looked towards the sea,
Where he and she had sat that moonlit night,
The Youth at early morn soliloquized:
"Her do I love with love deep as yon sea,
High as yon sky and wide as all the world.
She's all I ever hoped, or thought, or dreamed;
In face most fair, in heart a very saint,
Angel incarnate, beauty's masterpiece.
So rare a flower of human loveliness
Never before did bloom, with such perfume
Of gracious ways, sweet words, and gentle deeds."

Close by a white sea-dove did softly coo,
And often bowed and partly spread its wings;
But on the Maid his thoughts, not on the bird.
"Yes, I do love her—I do worship her,
Human I could not be and do aught less.
Within my heart she's wrapped securely up
Like some rare jewel in a casket strong;
And I in turn am all wrapped up in her.
My idol she, ever before my eyes,
And in my thoughts, awake or when I dream.
All transfused through my own her being seems,
And mine in turn commingled all with hers.
My heart and soul has she, and hers have I;
We twain are one, wedded in perfect love
As we and all the angels well do know;
But marry her that can I never do.

"First, here's no law to sanction, and no priest
The sacred marriage rites to solemnize.
To me she's like the holy Hebrew ark
Which none might touch until made consecrate.

"I'll not degrade her nor myself degrade,
But her bright honor will I ever guard,
And guarding hers do likewise guard my own.

"Then, I'm a Legion, she an exile's child.
In honor with the King and Court I stand;
She and her father both are in disgrace.
She says he's innocent and wrongly judged,
But how dare I the King's decree dispute?
To marry her would next to treason be,
And all my hopes of fame forever blast.

"Supreme commander must my judgment be,
And by its orders must I shape my acts,
Nor let my heart dictate my policy.

"In the right road to walk inflexible,
When sweet temptations beckon me to turn,
When hard and long pull stalwart appetites,

When woman's love invites you to her feast,
When friendship's self proposes compromise,
And shining fallacies like logic look.
The sturdy soul that 'gainst all these is proof,
And spite their powers keeps his honor bright,
Exhales a virtue that, upon this earth,
Makes strong the weak and up in Heaven receives
Immortal life, and joy forevermore —
On earth a hero, and in Heaven a saint.
On such God smiles, and owns them as his sons.
That smile I yearn for, and to do what's right
Ever I'll strive, rejecting what is wrong;
Bright honor keeping always full in sight,
And to temptation saying, 'Get behind
Me, Satan!' Help me, God, to do what's right!

"No Legion dare the smallest act perform
Which to his cheek the blush of shame would bring
Were it all blazoned broadly on the sky,
And plainly read by angels and by men.

"Shame is the watchman at bright Honor's gate,
And safe forever is its citadel
While he remains all faithful at his post;
But Shame once gone soon opened is the gate
And Honor's self forevermore destroyed.
With crystal water in a golden bowl,
And purest soap your brow you hard may wash,
And wipe with towel made of whitest silk,
But if dishonor's stain is branded there
Your washings and your wipings are in vain.
Ever my acts with honor then perfumed,
Ever my words stamped by the seal of truth:
Then dare I stand and every foeman face.

"Oh, sainted mother, angel in the skies!
Oh, sire, hero in life, in death a saint,
Help me the right to do, the wrong to shun.

"This girl I love, sincerely, madly love,
But how can Legion's son make here his home?
With her I cannot wed, for here no priest;
Then, too, alas, an exile's child she is.
I cannot take her to my arms, unwed,
That you, the Church and law alike forbid,
And her I love too much to do such wrong.
What must a Legion, then, in honor do?



Legion declines the Cup of Love.

About! To Shonbirg Hall forthwith return,
And prove myself worthy my parentage.
This jewelled cup of love I must decline,
Though to the brim all full of sweetest wine,
And she that offers it as fair and pure
As any angel up in Paradise.
Here is the chasm, here the bridge of fate,
Beyond the glittering heights of fame I see.
Where love abides ambition cannot dwell;

Who love salutes to fame doth bid adieu ;
Who drinks this wine a woman's slave becomes,
And on this side is doomed his life to spend.
This cup I'll waive aside, and cross the bridge,—
A Legion's son can do no otherwise."

CANTO 2.

The Youth's Aspirations.

Upon the shore he stood towards the east,
A troubled look upon his manly face.
His eyes were gazing far, and thus he mused :
"Oh, there are thoughts too subtle for mere words,
And sublime feelings subtler still than thoughts.
Into the world away, I know not where,
These thoughts and feelings like some destiny
Do force me on, as secret ocean tides
Afar do drag great ships once in their grasp."

New thoughts came thronging to his musing mind ;
Changed seemed the world, and different seemed life.
Upon the past his back he turned, and gazed
On what appeared most glorious scenes ahead.

Bright was the sky and bright the land and sea ;
With strength, and pride and hope his bosom swelled.
With doubled fist he smote his hand, and vowed
The deeds to dare that mighty men had done.
Strange light glowed in his eye as in a gem ;
About his compressed lips strange smiles did play,
But high above his brows his forehead shone,
White and serene, as though his intellect
And conscience were o'er all his thoughts supreme.
"So shall it be! Resolved I am. Henceforth
The deeds I'll do that pave the path to fame."
A shell he threw slantwise upon the sea :
From wave to wave it skipped against the breeze,
And rising landed gleaming on a rock.

"A glorious omen that!" he cried exultingly:
"Victorious over wind and wave it shines,
Bright and secure on yonder solid rock.
If feebly thrown it would have fallen short
And 'neath the sea have sunk ingloriously:
Thus to adversity the coward yields.
But let one bravely strive, and like that shell
Misfortune's adverse waves he'll mount, and soar
Sublime unto the shining heights of fame:
Each stumbling block he'll make a stepping-stone,
O'ercoming most where most are overcome."

Then proudly to the sky he looked, and smiled
Upon the golden archipelagoes
Which westward slowly sailed, like mighty fleets
Of splendid ships escorting in grand state
The mighty king of day as he retired
Unto his royal chambers for the night,—
While high above, with silvery radiance, shone
The star of eve, his fondest child, to guard
Her slumbering sire, and keep away the throngs
Of shadowy ghosts that in the east did loom.
Now night's victorious van the day pursues
O'er this half-world, while o'er the other half
Day's bright armed van pursues the fleeing night.
Always thus: here pursued, pursuing there,
They fight forever for the mastery.

"So right contends with wrong: some noble minds,
By genius fired, rush boldly to the front.
The future yields; right lifts on high her flag,
Foul error's progeny flee fast away,
Truth draws her sword, and with a mighty shout
For the attack marshals her armies wide;
And glorious scenes make glad the sons of men.

"But noiseless crawl the viewless feet of time,
Present and future both its prey become,
And soon are shrouded by its gloomy pall.

Beneath that pall the grandest empires lie,
And monarchies the most magnificent,
Renowned republics with their cities vast,
Proud capitol, and temples many-domed,
Inmixed with statesmen's hopes and patriots' dreams
And human skeletons, innumerable,—
One mouldy, cob-webbed, dusty, rubbish mass.

"But as the earth, despite the night and day,
Despite the seasons' changes, heat and cold,
Resistless rolls amid the realms of space,
So holy truth, despite time's sorceries,
God's will works out, and sounds the grand Advance."

So mused the Youth as darkness spread around,
And all things hid beneath her mantle's folds.
Then from their heavenly chambers came the stars,
And from the sea uprose the white-faced moon,
Till all resplendent glowed the firmament.

"Oh, happy augury!" exclaimed the Youth;
"The darkness pales, and hides away in fear:
Forever thus may light and truth prevail!
Then hence, despair, and hail thou holy hope.
Rejoice, oh sons of men! On earth keep peace,
Wars drive away, be brothers true and firm,
The seats of power, pride and pelf destroy,
(Vile error's chiefest champions are they,)
Then truth throughout the world will reign supreme,
And justice each land bless with equal rights.
His own shall each one have, no more, no less:
Who more does hold than a fair average
Of worldly wealth has robbed some fellow man,
Else holds the excess in trust for those in need.
Some day will come the Lord's millennium,
Then all the earth a Paradise will be,
And every man treat right his fellow-man.

"How my young heart doth long for deeds of fame!
Would I had lived to fight with Charlemagne,

Armed cap-a-pie, upon a horse of fire,
One of his paladins invincible,—
Routing the paynim hosts as lions rout
The wolves and jackals in a forest glade;
And after slaying many thousand foes
Return, with glory crowned, to Shonbirg Hall,
The curse of Willowdale somehow removed,
And wed a bride as fair as Margaret;
Or else, had lived to battle for the Cross,
By valiant Godfrey's side, victorious;
Or 'neath the flag of Richard Lion-heart,
With lance in hand, a keen sword at my side,
Upon my arm a bright heraldic shield,
And in my heart the love of Holy Church,
Fight for the cradle and the tomb of Christ,
'Gainst Saladin and all his Saracens,
And Tancred-like be famed throughout the world.
Nothing fear I to do but what is wrong,
And nothing dare I do but what is right:
On these two rules hang all a Legion's laws."

Then proudly his fine form he straightened up,
And on the sky looked as for stimulant,
Within his soul the shrine of holy truth,
And in his face bright honor blossoming.
Such thoughts as these came oozing through his mind:
"Inaction dulls the edge of mastery.
By waiting nothing's gained; by hoping nought
Is done that's real; by dreaming all is lost.
No roasted beeves, all smoking hot, to us
Will come with casks of wine and trays of bread
Upon their backs for us to make a feast;
No quails all broiled, hot toast within their beaks,
Into our mouths will fly, we on our beds;
No wealthy tailor e'er will hunt us out
Our forms to deck in splendid clothes, all free,
And fill our pockets full of shining gold;
No fairy queen will me a palace build,

And live therein as my own darling bride,
With all my wishes ever quick fulfilled;
No special Heaven will God around us build,
So we down here eternity can spend
And save the toil of flying up to Him.

"Incessant action is the only key
That opes the doors of Fortune's treasure-house.
Pray not to Heaven some good for us to do,
But vow that we ourselves will do the deed."
Warmed by such thoughts, at last he cried aloud:
"Oh, give me deeds not words, ripe fruits not flowers;
The fig tree that does nations feed no bloom
Displays: the dogwood bears no fruit nor nut,
But far and wide its scentless blossoms shine.
Act then will I; and not in words alone
Put my resolve, but in the adamant
Of my firm soul I'll carve it plain and deep."

CANTO 3.

Ambition Conquers Love.

Ambition of itself not evil is;
Ambition's aim gives it its character.
Ambition good to do, the world to bless
With peace and joy, is an archangel bright.
But when ambition seeks only one's self,
Unjustly sacrificing all things else,
A devil then it is most merciless.
Intention, not the deed, the doer makes
Guilty or innocent. 'Tis the intent
That gives each act its color, good or bad,
And makes ambition fair as Heaven, or foul as Hell.

Roaming the strand a boat the Youth espied,
But little wrecked, and ready for the sea,
With sails and compass, tools and furniture.

His eyes he fixed upon its figure-head:
An angel's form it had, within her hand
A bay-leaf crown, and in her mouth a trump.
Above her head a starry halo gleamed.
White was her robe inwove with laurel leaves.
One foot was resting on a globe, and one
Upon a broken scythe and shattered glass,
Whose sand was gone. "That effigy," he said,
"A cunning artist wrought,—but here's a name."
Letters there were, obscured by sand and moss:
These he removed, quickly but nervously.
"No, no; surely it cannot be," he mused.
The more he cleaned the plainer was the word.
"A-m, b-i, t-i, o-n," he spelled.
"Ambition! strange; indeed, 'tis marvellous."

The winds had smells of carrion on their wings.
Upon the stranded boat a shadow fell.
A raven on a point of rock near by
Bowed its foul head, croaked twice, and flew away.
A lonely moan came crawling o'er the sea;
A somber cloud the morning sun eclipsed,
And shrieks of sea-birds came from out the sky.
A few steps further on his carcass lay
Who'd sailed that boat, and on it ravens fed.
Oh, what if it the Youth had only seen?
"How strange all these occurrences!" he thought.
"Is this a mystic call on me to wake?
Circean draughts have I unwitting drank,
Changing my nature, making me content
Upon this isle to live—a woman's slave,
Like great Ulysses in the ancient days,
Contented on Calypso's isle to live?
A recreant am I in my father's sight?
Forgotten have I all his noble deeds?
No! by my soul's salvation I do swear
I've not forgot! ten thousand times no, no!

"Resolved I am this day to face about;
Ambition rules henceforth my every act,
And all my thoughts ambition's own shall be.
These evil auguries I do despise:
My strength of nerve and will they do but test,
And my soul's potency but verify.

"Surely these things all speak in trumpet tones,
And read as plain as print upon the sky.
Here is the boat, it's mission it proclaims,
I'm bid to enter in and sail away.
What needs a Legion more—or half so much?
That curse of Willowdale I do despise."

On small events earth's histories are hinged,
On tiny pivots oft men's fortunes turn,
And trifles make or mar our destinies.

CANTO 4.

Ambition Characterized.

Then to the Scribe there came such thoughts as these:
Ambition is a devil in man's heart
That genders glorious thoughts of fame and power,
But feeds and fattens on its progeny.
The blood it all infects, and man its slave
Becomes, its willing slave anxious to do
Whatever it suggests, however wrong;
Fair shapes of lovely hues its breath assumes,
And dreams of future glory fabricates,
A thirst it makes, that nought but fame can quench.
Self it does crown the mind's sole autocrat.
All pity is annulled; kinship ignored;
Falsehood honored; fidelity betrayed;
Treason rewarded; friendships all forgot;
And truth and justice trampled under foot.
Into a monster it transforms the man,
And makes his life unto his race a curse.

What he thought fame, when truth her record writes
But infamy will be, and lasting shame.

Ambition for the rule of right cares not:
The rule of right to each man gives his own.
Ambition glories in the rule of might
Which from him takes who lacks the power to hold
And to him gives who has the power to take.

To climb to power, on rights ambition treads,
On prostrate forms of enemies laid low,
On friends betrayed or helpless ones oppressed.

But fame's bright gilded thrones justice upsets,
And like a trembling thief ambition shrinks
Before the bar of right, knowing its guilt.
Ambition blazes like a rocket bright
High in the sky, and great applause calls forth;
But ended soon that show spectacular,
And prone on earth it lies, its glory gone.
At best, ambition does but grandly carve
A splendid sepulcher, whose occupant
Some fear, but none do love, and many hate.
Cæsar's ambition of Rome's capitol
His pyre did make, himself by traitors slain;
Charles, Sweden's brilliant madman, made the ball
That ended his ambition,—and his life;
Alexander but built a throne on swords
Which fought each other when he heirless died;
Ambition filled the ring of Hannibal,
And crammed its deadly poison down his throat;
Ambition steered the great Napoleon
To St. Helena, where, of power shorn,
He died an exile, of a broken heart;
Fizarro, who for glory and for gold
Did Peru sacrifice in blood and tears,
Himself a victim fell to traitors' swords
And died of wounds his own ambition made.
Who Rome did devastate, great Alaric,
Who in a wilderness youth's fountain sought

De Soto brave, both died in foreign lands,
And in a river's mud found sepulchers
Their own ambitions made, and sunk from view;
Satan's ambition dug the pit of Hell,
When but for it archangel would he be;—



Napoleon conquering the Alps.

And so ambition by ambition cursed
Finds all its glory sunken in its grave.

So thought the Scribe, and greatly did he grieve
At Margie's fate should Legion sail away,
Dragged by ambition's sorcery to death.

CANTO 5.

The Youth's Musings on Ambition.

But so thought not the Youth, and thus he mused:
"But who from fate can flee? Go where one will,
'Tis destiny that leads; do what one will
'Tis fate that shapes the deed. Oh, mystery!
In very truth, all, all is mystery.
God's self is mystery, and Heaven and Hell,
And life and death, and all the universe.
Then why strive I to loose this gordian knot
That binds to circumstance this mortal clay?
On the eternal charts of destiny
All marked my footsteps are unchangeable,—
Charts wrought of adamant by God's own hand
On that great first day of eternity,
When all the stars were in their places set,
And every act of man was foreordained,—
Unchangeable for all eternity.
Fate's puppets are we all; the iron wires
Her hands do hold, and as she strikes we move.
Come, then, thou pregnant future, let me see
The offspring of thy womb, fathered by fate;
For fate is all in all, and everywhere.

"A strange charm leads me on: bright is its look;
And be it Israel's light or false mirage,
Bravely unto the end I'll follow it,—
Lead it to glory or to infamy;
I'll risk—" Crash! in the sea from neighboring cliff
Down fell a towering rock; far o'er the waves
The echoes rolled, mixed in with sea-birds' shrieks,
And growls and barking of sea-lions fierce.

"That boat! Fame at its prow; Death at its helm —
Perchance, therein embarked some hopeful youth;
Ambition his bright pilot: storms came on —
The same, perhaps, that cast me on this isle —
He skill, or courage, or equipment lacked;
Fate was his enemy, fame not his friend;
And lo, his boat cast here upon the strand,
His body in the maws of fiendlike sharks,
Or else the food of ravens on the shore."
The Youth sat on a rock, and thus did muse:
"Ah, well-a-day! how like a dream it comes!
Beneath a tree I read of Roman kings,
Then pictured all the world one monarchy —
Myself upon its throne, and all earth's gold,
And all her virgins fair, at my command.
The story of the Sibyl strange I read,
And of the books she sold to Tarquin Proud.
'Tis true; Ambition is the Sibyl maid,
Not very fair but strong to fascinate.
Nine books she brings, a monstrous price she asks:
Oh, happy he who buys the nine complete,
E'en though thereby he beggars his estate.
Poisons they hold, but yet all antidotes.
Alas, oft we refuse. Before our eyes
Three precious books of antidote she burns.
Up through the smoke, the fire, and flaming leaves
A pageant gleams, all heavenly with peace
And happiness. With sighs we close the door,
And muse in sorrow on the life we've lost.
Again the Sibyl comes, her face more fair,
Though three books burned the price remains the same.
Like Rome's proud king we frown, and say 'Begone!'
Again she turns away: a strange smile dies,
Like phosphor on her face. Depressed we feel,
And wish the books we'd bought. Behold, a blaze!
Three others of her books the Sibyl burns.
Unto the very sky ascend the flames,
And o'er the world cast forth a mystic light,

To loveliness transfiguring every scene.
On everything most glorious tints are spread;
Like waves of molten gold doth shine the sea;
With rainbow hues the sky is all ablaze;
Sweet music, like Æolian symphonies
Thrills through the air and rolls along the earth,
While 'mong the radiant clouds dance angel forms,
With evolutions that make harmonies.
Ended these seeming scenes of Paradise,
The three remaining books the Sibyl brings:
For these the self-same monstrous price she asks,
Though six to smoke and ashes have been turned.
She smiles enchantment, and infatuate
The awful price we pay,—a sum composed
Of love and joy. Then, lo, her beauty fades,
A hunchback hag of ghastly hideousness,
She slowly melts in darkness from the view.
Peals through the air a stunning thunder-clap,
And all eclipsed the sun to darkness turns.
Slowly ascend black clouds of fetid smoke,
And with a funeral pall cover the earth.

“The buyer pales: his secret room he seeks;
The books he opes and reads; his eyes he shuts,
And thinks;—then reads again, and ponders much.
The roads to power, fame and royal thrones
The books portray; each path and step is marked,
Each word one needs to say, each thing to do;
But envy, fraud, deceit, hate, tears and blood
Are over all, the only price of each.
But see! upon the buyer's face a smile.
Of love and truth he reads with eager eyes,
Of happy days, and paths of pleasantness.
Soon comes a change. Despair beclouds his brow.
These ebon words of woe the last leaf end:
*‘The six books burned the paths of peace disclosed,
And told how men an Eden life on earth
Might live, and then an angel life in Heaven.’*

"Hurls he the volumes down, and from his mind
Their contents strives to drive;—alas, in vain!
Upon his soul a mighty spell doth rest,
Long time his face within his hands he hides,
On many plans he ponders, much perplexed;
Then pale as death the books picks slowly up,
And in a secret place conceals them all.



The Sibyl.

To Heaven his face he turns, as if to pray,
But lo, to prayer his lips and tongue are dumb!
In wrath he frowns; his foot he fiercely stamps,
'Then be it so!' he cries, all wrathfully,
'My name the world shall know, my power feel,
Though on my deeds attend both death and Hell.'"

Such thoughts and visions did the Youth possess
As though a vivid dream swayed all his soul.
Perplexed he was by these his reveries,
And somewhat angered at their awkward course.
"But why thus think and talk and nothing do?
'Tis action that achieves: action's a man
Who does, while talk's a woman who but plans.
What God doth think is done as soon as thought.
This earth's a thought of His; the universe
And all that it contains is but His thought.
Then let my thought and action be as one,
And some success I'm certain to achieve.
Oh, how I long for fame! how bright it glows!
Sublime as an archangel's highest flight,
On rainbow wings above the throne of God,
Cheered by hosannas from ten million saints.
In fortune's tide my boat I'll quickly launch
And happy be where'er its landing-place.
That curse of Willowdale shall daunt me not.

"Fame's steed which gallops through the upper air
Methinks is near, to bear me up on high.
His thrilling neigh I hear within my soul
Bidding me mount and fly. His very form
I faintly see — a shadow luminous;
His eyes shining like stars seen through a mist,
His nostrils wide and snorting meteors,
His great hoofs pawing up the rolling clouds,—
Anxious to go: nor will he linger long.
Who goes must mount at once: delay he hates,
And cowards scorns. Then will I go — and now!"

CHAPTER X.

The Triumph of Ambition.

PROEM.

The spell of ambition is more powerful than the spell of love in a Legion's heart. His boat is ready for his departure, and he acquaints the Maid with his resolve. In vain her distress and pathetic pleadings: he bids her farewell, and turns away, leaving her broken-hearted—himself in great distress. Then darkness covers the earth and fills their souls.

CANTO 1.

Ambition's Spell Invincible.

A wizard-ape ambition is that dons
An angel's face, enchanting to the view,
And tells, in tones that fascinate the ear,
Of mighty realms, great deeds and shining crowns;
But nothing says of happy homes destroyed,
Cities laid waste, and nations overthrown;
Nothing of widows wailing o'er their dead,
And starving orphans dying in the streets.
While hate and crime stalk arm in arm
In open day, where once lived love and law.
And thus upon the soul a mighty spell
Ambition lays, transforming men to fiends,
And making talents that the earth might bless
But instruments of havoc and despair.

Vengeance a while may sleep, but never dies.
The widow's wail, the orphan's tearful prayer,
The beaten slave's lament and clanking chain,
The cry for bread, the smoke of burning homes.
The seas of blood by low ambition shed,—
God heeds them all. "Vengeance is mine!" He saith,
And stretching forth his arm omnipotent,
With awful thunder-crash that stuns the world,
Appalling punishment on all inflicts
Who work such woes. Ah, when God's awful bolts
In vergeful wrath boom through the blazing skies,
When ruin stares the offender in the face,
How insignificant unholy fame!
His proper face the ape ambition shows,
All black and grim as Hell, and smeared with blood,
While near at hand an unrespected grave,
Whereon no grass will grow, no tears be shed.
So thought the Scribe, his heart with sorrow filled.

Oh, bid the swallow stop when through the air
The fly he chases for his morning meal;
Command the hungry condor stay his flight
When like a thunderbolt down from the sky
He swoops in greed upon his favorite prey;
Order the lioness to cease pursuit
When filled with rage and making mighty bounds,
She rushes on the flying thief who bears
Her squalling cubs away; demand of death
His well-aimed dart to check when hurtling through
The air towards a victim rightly doomed;—
But when ambition, like an eagle grand,
Hath his bright wings wide spread upon the air,
And on the sun his eager eyes firm fixed,
All vain entreaties or commands that seek
His course to stay, for destiny doth rule:
So read the words upon Laurel Leaves.

CANTO 2.**The Youth's Soliloquy on the Maid.**

The boat he for his voyage had prepared;
Its sails had fixed, its sides and bottom cleaned,
And for its masthead had a banner made,
With motto and device forecasting fame.
All day he'd spent, absorbed in thought and work,
And eve's long shadows stretched o'er sea and land,
Ere he unto his usual haunts returned.
Upon a rock he stood beside the shore
And gazed abroad upon the boundless sea.
"How small this isle with the great world compared!
How small the soul contented here to bide!
No, here I cannot stay; depart I must.
This lovely girl alone doth hold me here:
So good and kind, so gentle and so sweet,
So artless and sincere,—like nature's child,
Sinless as Eve before she ate the fruit,
Whose bosom's door is ever open wide,
Revealing every thought, and hope, and wish,—
Surely her equal ne'er on earth has been,
And Heaven itself has none superior.
Perfect she is, in feature, face and form,
In mind and heart and speech and every act.
Entranced am I by her sweet witchery.
Of aught but her, at times, I cannot think:
E'en like a magnet all my thoughts she draws.
Her slave I soon will be, without the power
Her presence to depart, or say her nay.

"An honored name to bear, and in one's veins
To carry noble blood obliges one
In word and deed a nobleman to be,
And keep one's honor bright, one's name renowned.
Were I not Legion I would marry her,
And in her loving arms contented live,
Making this isle an ocean Paradise:

But being Legion I must worthy prove
Of all the name of Legion doth require.

"But like a common serf to live and die,
No aspirations have for noble deeds,
No thirst for fame by mighty valor won,
Tied to this little isle, a woman's slave,
Like a pet dog to lick my lady's hand,
And play and fondle in her company—
If this the destiny of Legion's son,
Then come some thunderbolt, and lay me low,
Or with a quake engulf me, mother earth!
The webs of fate and love entangle me,
But like the prince by magic spells beset
My way through every obstacle I'll cut,
Until my eyes are clear, and free my feet.

"Living action is, thinking but a dream,
And dreaming's next to death: a stone doth dream,
And only dream,—and hence remains—a stone.
Men's dreams are but the ferment of their flesh.
Action spirit is, life's grandest crown;
The sign by which his victories are won.
Alas, how many spirits plumed with wings,
To fly among the stars where all may see,
By love's fair hands have had their pinions clipped,
And thenceforth flutter feebly near the ground.

"Try by a straw this rock to overthrow,
Try by a fire this ocean to consume,
Try by a web yon whirling wind to catch,
Try by a word to stop a thunderbolt,
Try by a spear yon sun to perforate,
But never try great glory to achieve
By basking in a lady's loving smile,
Though she as fair as ever angel was.

"I feel my country owns my life and sword,
And I a recreant to linger here,

Like one who never felt within him flame
That holy passion, love of native land."

On reading this the Scribe that flame did feel,
(His country then torn by the storms of war,)
And thus poured forth the fervor of his soul:

My Country.

"My country is my Holy Land,
All sacred is her sod;
My love begirds her like a band,
And holds her next to God.

"Like blossom shining in the sky,
Held up by angel hands,
Her flag all glorious to my eye
Doth consecrate her lands.

"Her sons all brothers are to me,
Her daughters sisters dear,
Each mountain, plain, river and sea,
As kinfolds do appear.

"Each tree, each vine, each blade of grass,
Each gentle beast and bird,
In my affections far surpass
Those that elsewhere are reared.

"My proudest thoughts are 'bout her fame,
My glories are her deeds,
About her greatness I declaim,
The wisdom of her creeds.

"To be enrolled a worthy son
My main ambition is,
My race beneath her flag to run,
Blest by her liberties.

"To link somehow with hers my name
By love and sacrifice,
Is all I wish of wealth or fame
This side of Paradise.

"My country thee I do adore,
Thy name's a sacred word;
To keep all foemen off thy shore
I'll battle with my sword.

"Upon thy bosom may I rest
All happy when I die;
No foe thy welfare to molest,
Thy dear flag waving high.

"Oh, Country of my hope and love,
E'er prosperous may you be;
And ever worthy may you prove
Your blood-bought liberty!

"Protect her, God, and guide her right,
Both on the land and sea,
May her dear flag shine ever bright,
Emblem of liberty!"

CANTO 3.

The Youth Tells of His Resolve to Depart.

The Youth continued thus to meditate,
By his conflicting passions much perplexed.
"Here comes she now, with joy her face ablaze.
Oh, what a dream of perfect loveliness!
Be strong, my heart; be mighty, oh, my soul!
Remember Legion's only son I am,
And what unto that noble name I owe."

"How glad am I to find you!" she exclaimed.
"All far and wide I searched, and no trace found,
While all in agony was my poor heart:
You out of sight I nought but sorrow know,
But with you near full is my happiness."
His hand she kissed, and bathed it with her tears,
While overhead soft cooed a white sea-dove.

Oh, what a strain upon his heart it was
Not to enfold her in his loving arms,
Her tears kiss all away, and in her ears
Vow tenderly never her side to leave.
Quickly her eye did notice his reserve.
"Why look and speak so sad?" softly she asked.
"Because of destiny," he answered low.
Feeling a twinge at thought of Willowdale.
Within her ears those words rung like a knell.



A Legion's Destiny.

"Oh, tell me all," she said imploringly,
Gazing with tearful eyes into his face.
"I cannot tell; my thoughts I cannot phrase."
"What thoughts?" she begged, fondly around his neck
Placing her arms. "Oh, please, do let me know."
"What it all is I cannot well express,
But in my soul a voice I seem to hear
That warns me we must part." "Part? part? so soon?"
She cried, and crouching down burst into sobs,
Within her slender hands hiding her face.

"When from this dream shall I be all awake?"
He mused. "This lovely girl, so young and good,
And all alone; this fairy isle; these skies
So bright; this silver sea! how beautiful,
How like a vision of pure fancy made,—
If not itself a dream! What shall I do?
Oh, how my heart is torn, my mind upset!
Methinks I hear my father say, 'Be strong!'"

The Maiden rose, and looked into his eyes,
Most piteously. "You will not go?" she said,
Grasping his hands in hers. "I cannot live
Without you by my side. My heart's full love
You have: that must you know. If not my words,
My acts—oh, Legion, dear, have you no love?"
Sobs choked her voice, and on a rock she sat,
While grief's tornado raged within her soul.

When calm she grew the Youth sat by her side,
And told her how his duty to his name
Called him to Shonbirg Hall, and fields of fame;
How that his King and country owned his sword,
And he must rally where their flag was reared.

"I pray you, darling, hearken to my word—"
Like one inspired she spoke, with open eyes,
Her tears all gone, and angel-like her face.
"Deep in my soul, upswelling strong, I feel
The prompting words of truth and prophecy.
My father I've heard talk, and read his books.

That wicked world so far away forget:
There men do hate and evil deeds commit,
While with their lips they falsely say they love.
Within their mouths bright honeyed words, but gall
Within their hearts, and daggers in their sleeves.
Hypocrisy rules every word and deed,
And selfishness the mainspring of their lives.
Oh, 'tis a wicked, wicked, wicked world,
And all mankind move in a masquerade,—
One's true face ever hid from others' eyes,
One's character to all a mystery:
So have I read, and so my father says.
He in ambition's mazes long did tread,
Nobly his duty did to King and State,
On many battle-fields poured out his blood,
Proving himself a hero 'mong the brave.
And what was his reward? An exile's lot;
From home, and friends, and fortune driven out;
His name befouled; his foes victorious,
And he slow dying of a broken heart.
To such a world oh, venture not again.
Be brave; the power of destiny defy;
Against the tyranny of fate rebel;
In God have faith, and to your self be true.
There is no fate, and destiny's a dream;
They're fancy's calibans, and ogres grim,
By devils bred within the hearts of men,
Great deeds of wickedness to justify:
From all these subtle fancies turn away.
Too gentle you for earth's vile Babylons.
Fame calls, you say: her siren voice despise.
Win fame in Heaven by deeds of love on earth.
All worldly fame must die, and be forgot.
The wild fox haunts the halls of Nineveh,
The serpent hisses in Persepolis,
Where mighty Carthage stood now hoots the owl,
And Egypt's cities are beneath the sand.
Of all earth's millions who have longed for fame
How few their names preserved in history!"

CANTO 4.

The Youth Tells What Fame Is.

"Despite all this for fame I long," he said.
"This longing get I from my father's blood.
Myself I would not be, nor his true son
Did I not long for fame." "What is this fame?"
She asked, with searching look. "Ask you what's fame?
Fame is the perfume of resplendent deeds
All-gloriously achieved, despite great foes
And mighty obstacles. Fame is the sight
Of one's full name in shining letters writ,
High in the sky, which none can help but read.
Fame is by poets to be deified,
By history decreed earth's demi-god,
Outshining Alexander, Hannibal,
Cæsar, Constantine and Charlemagne;
One's littlest deeds rehearsed in children's songs,
His acts illustrious themes of orators.
Fame is the gorgeous dazzling capital
Of that colossal column reared sublime
Earth's greatest glories to commemorate.
All this ambition seeks,—and vastly more.
Oh, there's a glory brighter than the sun
When throned at mid-day in the blazing sky;
A song sweeter than Heaven's seraph choir
Ever has sung; a nectared wine that thrills
The heart and soul with an unceasing joy;
A trump like Gabriel's that sounds your name,
And bids the whole wide universe applaud;
A crown so bright, the stars are all eclipsed;
A throne so high and grand that all mankind
Can him behold who's seated there—a king.
Ambition is a thirst for all of these,—
A thirst eternal, and unquenchable.
And when you've got them all as nought they are
Until the czarship of the universe
Is reached, and kings, princes and presidents,

Poets and prophets, and all mighty men,
On bended knees, with upraised heads and hands,
Their plaudits daily in your ears pour forth,
While roar of trumpets, drums, and music-bands,
Fill land and sea and sky with peals sublime:
These are the triumphs high ambition seeks,—
And all else that is grand and glorious.”

CANTO 5.

The Youth's Departure.

“Your heart I see is fixed,” she said with sighs;
“And I to you am nought compared with fame.”
“Oh, say not so!” he cried; “’tis destiny
That parts us: free I’m not, I’m forced away.
Never your kindnesses will I forget;
Grateful am I beyond all utterance.
When back again I get to Shonbirg Hall
Some tokens of regard I’ll send to you.
And now, farewell, farewell!” Not looking up,
Nor waiting for more words, he turned and left.

No step she took, but watched his fading form,
As though to it her eyes and thoughts were glued,
Till out of sight; then on the earth she sat,
And in a flood of tears, and sobs, and groans,
Her grief poured forth;—while darkness gathered ’round,
And overhead the white sea-dove low mourned.

“I’ve done the best for her and for myself,”
The Youth did muse, as from the Maid he went.
“No other road saw I where honor was.
But oh, what anguish racks my bleeding heart!
All happiness I leave behind with her:
No joy of love ever again I’ll know.
Would I were now a knight in armor clad,
A thousand hostile warriors in my front,
That like a thunder-bolt of Heaven’s wrath

I might charge forth, rejoicing unto death,
My life's blood mingling with my enemies',—
And by such deed achieve eternal fame;—
Fulfilling, too, that curse of Willowdale."

Upon a rock he sat, feeling like one
To whom all life's a blank: not wholly clear
His conscience felt. "Worse may be death to some,
But not to me," he mused, as darkness came.

CANTO 6.

Darkness Drives Away the Light.

And Night with all her solemn shadows came.
As on the plains descend the locust swarms,
In monstrous multitudes, darkening earth
And sky, covering deserts, forests, fields,—
Devouring every leaf and blade and twig,
And nought but blackness leaving in their wake;
As o'er the vales and plains, then o'er the hills,
Spread far and wide and high the swelling Flood;
Then rising higher still and ever higher
Closed o'er the highest peaks of Ararat,
Covering the earth and its inhabitants,
Till one wide waste of waters was the world;—
So on came Night, with all her armies vast,
Squadrons of shades, brigades from Erebus,
Cimmerian hordes, legions of nebulae,
Swarms of abettors and accomplices,
And flocks of ravenlike confederates,
Marching in columns wide as all the earth,—
Conquering and to conquer firm resolved.

About the center of her mighty host,
High 'bove the earth, rode Night victorious:
Her garments spreading wide as sea and land;
Her person sacred and scarce visible;
Her chariot huge of solid darkness built;

Her flying steeds the mighty shadows were ;
Her body-guard mists, clouds, smoke, shades, and glooms.
Her favorite birds, owls, bats and whipporwills.



Night.

In darkest majesty on moved her train.
Subduing first those mighty eastern seas
That surge against the Asian continent,
Night's swarthy hosts, of victory confident,

Swept o'er the mountains huge of old Japan,
Driving the lagging soldiers of the Sun,
Westward into the hazy skies afar.

The black horse cavalry of Erebus,
Aided by sable warriors of the woods,
Canyons and caves, swarmed wide along the shores,
And high upon the loftiest mountain tops,
Their ebon flags displayed, victorious,
Amid applause from panthers, wolves and owls;
The hosts of Day retreating in affright.
But not contented with such conquests vast
Insatiate Night continued her pursuit,
Her dark-faced myrmidons ever in front,
Charging the valleys and the wide-spread plains
Until beneath her feet Siberia lay
Down to the mountains of the Manchu land;
The snowy crests of lofty Stonovoi,
The last defences Day's bright armies held.

Stretching from seas where summer never comes
Down to those seas where winter never goes,
Along the backbone of the Asian world,
In solid phalanx Night's black bannered hosts
Moved with momentum irresistible,
Ever towards the west, like countless hordes
Or Tartar tribes aiming the western world
To overrun and utterly destroy;
The Flowery Kingdom seemed all swallowed up,
The great wall climbed, the Gobi desert passed,
And Himalaya's domes of ice and snow,
(Which nearest reach unto the floor of Heaven,)
Slunk out of sight, pale and inglorious,
The sickly soldiers of the Sun there massacred.
From Asia's lofty roofs descending now
With victory jubilant, Night's shadowy hosts
Swarmed o'er the realm of ancient Babylon,
Their sooty tents pitched thick on Sinai,
Old Egypt conquered, seized the pyramids;

Then, all puffed up with pride of victory,
A throne of darkness built on Atlas' head,
And thence cast spells that blinded men and beasts
O'er all of Africa, and isles beyond.

In full retreat Day's troops disordered fled,
Their bloody trails showing along the west
What dreadful carnage had their fighting cost.
Now, o'er the middle seas Night's vanguards marched,
From blazing Etna to Mount Ararat;
The Urals climbed, the Norseland fiords seized;
Then with a charge, vast and tumultuous,
All Europe filled with darkness, glooms and shades,
As though life, light and joy were all destroyed.
Beyond the Sea of Horrors daylight fled,
Unto that Western world which Eric found
While wandering far in his Varangian sloop.
So black-faced Night, and her Cimmerian hordes,
Filled land, and sea, and sky, with blinding fogs,
Which unto many sorrows brought, and tears.

The island Redenfayn, wrapped in Night's folds
Like a weird region looked where ghosts might stray,
And specters make their haunts, compassed about
By shadows thick, and billows moaning low.
The boding hoots of lonely owls, the croaks
Of imp-like ravens flitting through the dark,
The wailings of a sad sea-lioness
Who'd lost her mate, floated wide in the air,
Like the despairing cries of souls forever lost.
Oh, Redenfayn, that night how black to you!
That night — the darkest, longest e'er they'd know —
In agony the Maid and Youth did spend,
Each minute marked with tears, and sighs, and groans.
How well with woe is darkness in accord!
How well does night with sorrow sympathize!
For night and darkness fill all souls that grieve.

That curse of Willowdale its wrath did work.

CHAPTER XI.

The Youth's Quest of Fame.

PROEM.

The links are severed, and the Youth embarks to seek for fame. His reveries on his voyage, A storm arises and menaces his boat: he defies the storm, and escapes with his life. Ambition's boundless desert looms before him. Seeking to cross it he encounters many privations and dangers, cheered only by glimpses of what he supposed was the Temple of Fame, but which were mere mirages. Foiled at every point he tries the ways of war, but not succeeding, takes the path of peace: discomfiture, however, continued to be his fate, despite his valor and persistence.

CANTO 1.

The Youth Sails Away.

With dawn of day the Youth was at his boat,
Eager to sail away, lest loitering
Some mishap might invite. The Rubicon
He'd crossed; to love and ease had bade adieu;
And now faced hardship and a strenuous life,—
With a heroic purpose in his heart.
“Good, every sign!” he cried. “Bright is the sky,
And fair the wind: the tide begins to ebb.”

Quickly the sails he raised, the anchor shipped,
His flag run up unto the mast-head high:

Blue were its folds; an eagle o'er them spread,
Holding a scroll, on which was written "Dare!"
Toward the sea his boat's gay prow he turned,
And soon across the sea was speeding fast.
Towards the isle his eyes he would not turn
Lest her dear form he'd see, or something else
His will to shake, his heart to penetrate.

"Hail, glorious world!" he cried. "Hail all thy strife!
Hail, iron will! Hail heart that ever hopes!
Hail, soul that ever dares! Hail, destiny!
Hail, purpose ne'er to yield nor turn aside!
Hail, victory, and fame's eternal crown!"

High o'er his head his hat he waved, and sent
Across the smiling sea, to all the world,
A shout of challenge and defiance bold.
His boat across the waters fairly flew,
Gaily its banner fluttered in the breeze,
The helm and keel its prow kept to the east,
And soon far out of sight was Redenfayn.

"And now again I'm free," exclaimed the Youth.
"How sweet is liberty! free would I be
E'en were my prison-pen a Paradise,
My shackles love, and angels' eyes my watch.
No kingdom want I less than all the world,
And win I less I lose what most I wish.
Fame in her open hands bright honors holds
And smiling bids me throw my gauntlet down,
Nor fear the arm of him who picks it up.
Inaction turns all hope into despair,
And to oblivion drags what else were fame,
My home and battle-ground is all the world;
All who oppose me I'll call enemies;
All who assist, they shall my brothers be,
And princes will I make them when I'm crowned.

"Upon a needle's point turn great events,
And when above our heads blind fortune hangs

Her golden scales, one filled with every woe
Th' other with every boon and every prize,
How oft some trivial thing the scales doth turn,
And in our laps drop fame or infamy.
Too short this life for quibble or delay:
Then action be my motto and my guide,
Action incessant and most strenuous.
All honor, wealth and fame from action come;
And he with equal judgment who most acts
Will on life's battle-field most glories win.

"As for that woman's curse at Willowdale,
Upon my house and name, I heed it not.
No woman's tongue can fright me from my path.
I'd rather die in youth as father died,
In battle fierce, covered with bloody wounds,
But all ablaze with glory and with fame,
Than live a thousand years, and be despised:
Like Alexander doing mighty deeds
But dying young; not like Methuselah
Who lived nine hundred years—and nothing did.

"Oh, could I have my wish this would it be:
To have great armies: I their chief and pride:
With them by deeds of skill and bravery
Surpassing all in myth or history,
The world to conquer,—I its only king.
My name blazed on the sky with brightest stars
That never set, but shine forever there;
And when I die my soul borne up on high
In chariot sublime, of rainbows made,
Drawn by archangels with their wings wide spread,
Sounding my fame afar with trumps of gold,
And I thenceforward worshipped as a god."

So wild and boundless was his lust for fame.
On, on he sailed: backward he never looked,
But ever on, towards the shining east.
As rose the sun dull mists came from the sea,

And lurid hues shone gloomy in the sky.
Shifted the winds, then sunk into a calm.
The boat's sails idly flapped, all progress gone.
Across the sea some whirlwinds dancing came
In reckless glee. The dull mists changed to clouds,



Crowned King of the World.

Portentious grew the sky, and chilling blasts
Rushed darkly o'er the sea, waking the waves.
Some charts the Youth did scan, on axioms based:

Plain were their words, their application vague
And puzzled more than explanation made.

CANTO 2.

An Ocean Storm.

Clouds thronged in troops across the darkened sky,
And squalls like demons rushed from wave to wave;
While high in air leaped ghostlike spurts of spray.
Gone was the sun; low moans the wind did make,
And gloomy shadows on the sea did brood.
High overhead loudly the thunders rolled,
And here and there a fiery bolt shot down.
Quick stepping o'er the waves came on the rain;
More fierce and boisterous grew the warring winds,
Tumultuously and huge the billows rolled,
Lightnings and thunders were on every hand,
And all the elements in riot raged.

"Air-tight my boat, and so well ballasted
She cannot sink nor be capsized," he thought.
His sails he reefed, and down his hatches keyed,
Preparing for the worst the storm could do.
On came the clouds, like a great wolfish host
Searching with awful howling for their prey;
And with the roaring winds, the rolling waves,
The crashing thunders and their hissing bolts,
A chaos made more terrible than Hell.

"Like to a boat is man, by tempests scourged,
And buffeted by many warring waves,
Striving a port to reach. But be he strong,
Though oft by winds and waves forced from his course
The helm aright he'll hold, and his flag keep
High over head floating defiantly,
Until his port at last is safely gained,
And he 'mid shouts by fame crowned conqueror.

"When smooth the sea and fair the gentle wind,
All men are sailors good; but when doth rage
The storm, the billows roll, the breakers roar,
And lightning shafts flash thundering 'bout one's head,—
Then comes the test supreme of seamanship."
So thought the Youth as breasted he the storm:
And hap what might his soul was not dismayed.
When highest leaped the waves, and loudest roared
The winds, when thunders most the earth did shock,
And lightnings fiercest flashed, when sails were rent,
Broken were ropes and booms, and leaks were sprung,
To every challenge he defiance hurled:
"Nil desperandum! Dare, my motto is!"

Bravely 'gainst winds and waves his boat bore up,
Contending hero-like 'gainst many foes,
And bravely he his sturdy boat did back,
Keeping its prow ever against the storm,
And its sails set to aid its rigid helm.

But God is in the storm, and fail must man
When overcome by force superior.
All day for life he and his boat had fought,
But drawing near was night,—and he no lamp,
No comet, star, no meteor nor moon,
Nought but the blinding flare of thunder-bolts.
Then did he feel the crisis was at hand.
His sails he fixed, and firmly tied his helm
The storm to face: this done himself he bound
Unto the mast. Then in the dark he plunged
As in a cave that was all bottomless.
Nought could he see but phosphor in the spray;
The lightnings only showed how black the dark.
And oh, the roars of winds, the howls of blasts,
The surgings of the seas, the shocks of waves,
The shriekings in the air of stricken birds,
The rolling of the thunders far and wide,
Mixed in with crashes like a mountain's fall.

Nature herself seemed in death's agony,
And Chaos once again in mastery.

CANTO 3.

The Youth's Struggle with the Storm.

But in his breast his heart was ever brave,
As did become the valiant Legion's son:
No coward thoughts dared ever venture there.
True, once his mother's voice he seemed to hear,
And oft the Maiden's eyes he thought he saw.

"If here I die," he muttered through his teeth,
"Alone, unfriended, fighting for my fame,
Head up I'll die, and facing every foe;
My flag bidding defiance from on high,
With its brave eagle, and its motto, 'Dare.'"

But nature made not men invincible,
And o'er him came a stupor like to sleep.
To keep awake he strove, but strove in vain.
The roaring storm his ears no longer heard,
The sting of spray his cheeks no longer felt,
The lightning's flash his eyes no longer saw;
But as his senses all to sleep did sink,
In fiendish glee the demons of the wind
Did play upon the mast and spars and ropes,
And shreds of tattered sails, as on a harp,
And made them shriek, and yell, and groan and howl,
And wail, in an infernal requiem.
Its sinewy arms a mighty whirlwind threw
Around the battered boat, its flag tore off,
And masts and sails and spars hurled half on deck
And half upon the waves. The Youth awoke
A moment in a daze—a horrid sight
Confronting him, around, above, below.
In paroxysms most diabolical
Did howl and roar the Titans of the storm,

Belaboring the waters and the winds,
The skies and shores; the world's fixed boundaries
Striving to overthrow, loud battering
With billows, blasts and awful thunder-bolts
Those doors eternal that do keep confined
Old Chaos and his lawless giant sons,
Who once in ruins kept the universe;
Till by Jehovah's word all paralyzed,
And chained in dungeons deep forevermore.
The mighty world a boundless pit did seem,
As wide and deep and dark as Tartarus,
Where monstrous demons, lions, tigers, bulls,
Did fight each other with infernal hate,
While them, and all things else, the hurricanes,
The furious lightnings, and the mountainous waves,
In awful passion strove to overwhelm,
And with a devilish vengeance all annihilate.
At war infernal all the world did seem,
And nought but war infernal anywhere.
Then with a sigh the Youth in sleep did lapse,
The ropes and mast's split stump supporting him.

How long the tempest raged, what bolts of death
The Youth escaped, whither his spirit fled,
Or where it lodged, while he insensible,
What darksome paths through earth and seas he trod,
What guardian hands from harm protected him,
What prayers befriended him—there is no proof.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms,

All bright the sun shone in the morning sky
When he awoke, sick and dispirited.
The rope which bound him to the mast's split stump,
In vain he strove to loose: hard were the knots,
By water swollen tight; and gone his strength.

"Oh, what a double dose of Hell I've had!"
He muttered with a sigh: "one in that storm,
And one in dreams—or else in the Abyss,—

Which I know not, but know through what I went.
No sinner dead and damned could suffer more.
But where am I? and what am I to do?
Lashed hard and fast, too weak the knots to loose;
No water, and so dry my tongue and throat,
For drink my heart and veins are all athirst.
Here must I die, upon this broken mast
Self-crucified? This then my destiny?
No, no! some whence will come deliverance.
Never will fate such death to Legion bring!"
His spirit flamed, and hope did blaze anew.

Then loomed the land. His boat some fishermen
Did seize, and him unbound and thrust ashore,
With brutal blows and words opprobrious.

C A N T O 4.

Ambition's Desert.

Up straightening his form he from his face
His tangled hair pushed back, and looked around:
Though hungry and athirst onward he went.
"Despair I never will until is closed
And sealed the judgment book of fate," he said.
Within his eye glittered the star of hope,
And on his brow a high resolve was throned.
"Our troubles flee if on them we advance;
Ghosts turn to nought when we upon them rush;
Ships face the wind that safely ride the storm:"
With musings such as these he journeyed on.
Before the Youth ambition's desert stretched;
Loud boomed along the sands a lion's roar,
On every side burst forth the jackals' shrieks,
While overhead buzzards and eagles sailed,
Among some shrubs he shrunk and tried to sleep.
Hyenas flocked around with dismal cries,
And through the livelong night their red eyes glared.
With morn's first beams he rose. Their rocky lairs

The wild beasts sought, their roosts the birds of night.
He thought he saw afar fame's golden dome;



Legion in Ambition's Desert.

But on the road lay many skeletons.
By famine pressed some prickly shrubs he eat;
Bitter their taste. "Ah, yes, the aloe this,
Imagination's favorite. How odd
Their many shapes. No other bush here grows.
Does it all other plants exterminate,
And rule sole monarch of these sandy plains?
Or will there grow no other shrub amid
These rocks and arid wastes? How small its root;
On air it lives, and therefore is it called
Imagination's plant. Where all else dies
It flourishes and takes fantastic shapes.
Of all this multitude but one doth bloom:
That one a century old; and none bear fruit."
Little he thought what close analogy
Imagination and ambition bear.

"Yon road's not long," he said. "The spires I see!"

Delight exultant danced upon his face.
In golden gorgeousness the sun sunk down,
And through the sky loomed all the western crags
Like domes and towers of purple, red and gold.
"Fame's temple bright!" he cried; "hurra! hurra!"
His face was joy, his heart was ecstasy.

Down went the sun; up came the face of night.
The golden domes became but frowning rocks.
" 'Twas but the sunshine on those lofty crags,"
With sighs he said. Hunger and thirst returned;
Cold winds blew o'er the land and chilled his blood,
While thoughts of her he'd left in grief behind
Created riot in his heart and soul,
And made him feel a wicked criminal.
Remorse, remorse, thou worm within the heart,
How sharp thy teeth do bite, how keen thy sting!

At earliest dawn the Youth was on his feet,
Resolved no time to lose in idleness.
Onward he sped across the shadeless plain.
Upon his head the sun shone fiercely down,
About his path were skeletons and thorns.
Thus day by day the lone Youth journeyed on,
Thinking by day of fame to be achieved,
Dreaming by night of her he'd left behind.
Still seemed to shine afar the golden dome.
'Mong tribes of warring men at length he came,
And cautious sought a neutral road to take,
That he unharmed might through their country pass.
This neutral road he found their battle-field,
Himself by all suspected for a foe.
One side wore feathers black, the other brown,
Their cause of quarrel but a dim mirage,
Their prize a sandy waste where none could live.
No feather wore the Youth, but talked of peace,
And strove the war to end: they sneered and mocked.
By night he fled away, a wiser man.

Before his feet another desert lay;

But far ahead the dome he thought he saw.
A horse he mounts: his hopes are all revived.
'Mong briars, pits and stumbling-blocks he speeds.
'Tis noon: the sands seem swimming in a blaze;
The horse by thirst o'ercome falls down and dies.
Eager around the wolves and jackals crowd,
Out of the horse their hungry maws to fill.
Hobbling on blistered feet on went the Youth,
Towards what seemed the golden dome afar;
But darkness came, and down he laid and slept.
Amid his sleep appeared the Maid with food
And drink: the water to his lips he raised:
Lo, 'twas but sand. "Such be thy drink, oh Youth!"
She seemed to say. His eyes he oped: 'twas morn.
Sad but undaunted still he journeyed on.
All bright fame's temple loomed, but far ahead,
'Mid flowing water, trees and shaded grass.
With stronger step, and cheerier countenance,
He hastened on: *so read the Laurel Leaves.*

Thus o'er the desert, and through briars and rocks,
'Mong wolves, jackals, and other beasts of prey,
Vultures and ravens, (corpses their only food.)
For many days he sped as best he could,
His bread but roots, his drink from stagnant ponds.

CANTO 5.

The Youth takes Part in a Debate.

No longer loomed the dome of shining gold,
The groves and flowing streams and cooling shades.
"All gone!" he said; "'twas nought but a mirage."
Sad was his face, desponding was his voice.
Aside he turned where men in tumult were,
And joined the strife. Debate was everywhere.
"Hurra, a champion!" his party cried.
"Impartial is his mind, and we are right."
"Impostor!" cried his foes; "and we are right."

Seized was the Youth, and bound. "The axe! the axe!"
His captors screamed. Chained were his hands and legs,
And he in prison thrust, lonely and deep,



Legion in Prison.

Darksome and damp. There long in pain he lay,
His food scanty and vile, filthy his drink.
What was his crime none knew. The jailer feared
His cell to ope, the judge his plea to hear.
And why? Because he was all innocent!
"If tried," said they, in secret caucus met,
"All men will see that he no wrong has done,
And blamed we'll be. The longer then in chains
We keep him here, the longer we'll be just;
For just are they who keep injustice hid."
While with the Maid, upon the ocean isle,
One hair of hers, so silken, fine and long,
Blew from her head one day upon his face:
He picked it off, discerned that hers it was,
And in his locket fondly coiled it up.

A woman's hair, though fragile, fine and slight,
More strong a man to draw, when love doth aid,
Than rope, or cable wire, or iron chain.
This little hair his only solace was,
And in that prison foul he would have died
But for the magic of its potency.
The Maid it kept forever at his side;
By day, her face so fair, her eyes so sweet,
So full of tenderness, were oft in view;
By night, within her loving arms he lay
And her cheek felt press softly 'gainst his own:
That hair his prison-hell a Heaven made.
Love's charm it was: *so read the Myrtle Leaves.*
How strange the power of a single hair
When hallowed by the memories of love!
Like alchemy it turns the dregs of woe
Into a bliss as sweet as Paradise.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

One night his door they oped, his bonds took off,
And bade him flee, and nevermore return.
While glad, his rivals frowned as though in wrath,
Called him a knave from justice thus to flee
At dead of night;—but no reward would give
For his return, and raised the jailer's pay!

CANTO 6.

The Paths of War, and Paths of Peace.

Recovered from his wounds and prison fare,
A city large entered the Youth, with hope;
And soon in public life success achieved.
As great he was by multitudes acclaimed,
And, thought he, fame at last was really won.
But lo, a leaf Change turned, and waved her hand,
Upon the multitudes casting a spell.
With hoots the Youth was from his office hurled,
With bribery charged, and treason to the State.


Low hovering o'er his head on vulture's wings,
Despair plucked at his heart, and barely missed.
That curse of Willowdale its wrath did work.

By night the Youth escaped, and saved his life.
Firmly resolved never to yield nor quit,
A third attempt at fame the Youth now made.
To the untrodden air-line route that oped
Short roads to eminence he bade adieu,
And sought the routes trod since the days of old:
Two high and well-worn lanes, together bound
By intersecting paths, and raised so high
Each traveler plainly shore to those below;
And some like giants 'bove th' horizon loomed.
One path was trod by warrior kings, and chiefs
Of deathless fame, who fought with bloody swords,
And armies marshalled on the plains below;—
The other path civilians eager swarmed,
And never ceased their Babel-arguments.
Thus thundered war alike on either path—
A war of swords, or else a war—of words.

Around were multitudes of murdered men,
And men with wounds that crippled them for life;
While bleaching in the sun were countless bones.
In loathsome dens sat hoary Ignorance,
And Prejudice her son, with poisoned darts;
There masked in white, like Truth, sat Calumny,
Moving her serpent-tongue incessantly,
But in her mouth hiding its venom'd forks
That men might not her character detect:
Thousands her accusations false laid low,
And few recovered whom her tongue assailed.
There low-browed Treachery his knife concealed,
While Envy, sallow-eyed, sneered openly,
But stabbed in secret, wounding multitudes.

These two pathways, unto the gaze of men,
Showed all Fame's followers; and lookers-on

Hooted or cheered, as they were pained or pleased.
A stately arch high o'er each entry stood,
Adorned with gilt, and colors flaming bright,
And gaudy pictures of heroic deeds:
Much as a circus doth its shows display.
On one arch Peace, in snowy robes arrayed,
A crown of olive leaves upon her head,
Within her gentle hands parchment and pen,
And at her feet full cornucopias.
High o'er the other arch, resplendent shone
The god of war, in mail of glittering gold,
With sword and spear whose blades like lightning flashed,
And helm and shield that did the sun outshine,
While at his side a mighty war-horse neighed.
Crowds poured continuous through these dazzling gates,
Disparaging the pains and snares ahead,
Or like night moths bedazzled by the glare.
Ofttimes her path the champions of Peace
Would leave, and take the bloody trail of war,
Which though more dangerous was not so long:
But seldom crossed the champions of War
To paths of peace. Beneath the flaming Mars
The Youth rushed hopefully. A hill he gained
And looked ahead: the dome seemed well in view.
The mighty crowd that thronged beneath the arch
Diminished fast as on it went, till soon
But few were left, and far away not one.
Unawed he drew his sword and joined the fray,
Battling for glory, country and his King.
Long, long he fought, and trod on many a corpse,
Winning applause from friends, respect from foes,
Rewards from royalty,—glory from all.
And near ahead seemed Fame's bright dome of gold,
Where Hope assured him he would find his crown.



CHAPTER XII.

The Forsaken Maiden.

PROEM.

The anguish of the Maid at the Youth's departure is intensified by her fear that the storm may have wrecked him. Walking along the shore she finds a daisy, and is thereby led to forecast what might happen should the Youth return. Her Sire questions her about her sadness, and she confesses all. It develops that the hero who rescued and nursed the Youth's father is none other than the Maid's father, and they both deplore that this was not known before the Youth's departure. The Land of Gloom described where walk the spirits of the disconsolate, the abode of wretchedness and despair, on the borders of which the Maid's soul often wandered in its agonies. Her vigils on the cliff described, where every day she sat looking through tears ever eastward across the sea, hoping for the Youth's return, despair and fear haunting her. But ever her faith in him was firm, and she never forgot that he who eastward sails some day will come again. The second *Chasm* is here reached: it may be bridged by repentance. Paradise is on the other side.

CANTO 1.

The Maid's Distress.

How long in grief upon the ground she sat,
And when she left, and how her room she reached,

She never knew,—except as in a dream.
But with day's dawn upon the shore she was
Hoping some glimpse once more she'd get of him.
"Oh, God, help Thou my aching heart!" she prayed.
"I'm crazed with grief, and what to do know not!"
Above the sea up peered the sun's round face,
And in her weeping eyes all grimly stared,
As though his heart were stone. Eastward she looked,—
And lo! upon the ocean's utmost verge
A small boat's sails shone up against the sky,
As in mirage. "He's gone—he's gone!" she cried.
"Oh, he is gone, and left me all alone!"
Upon the shore in utter woe she swooned,
And far away her spirit must have flown.
Hours passed: the sky with angry clouds was dark.
A lightning flash gleamed dazzling through the air
And quick as thought an awful thunder-crash.
The maiden rose, half-dazed, and looked around.
Fear nerved her heart and limbs to bear her home,
The while the storm in fury grim did rage.

Worn with fatigue and misery of soul,
Upon her couch she lay. "What awful winds!
Oh, how the lightnings hiss and flash and blaze!
How horribly the winds and rains do war!
Against the rocks I feel the billows beat
As though they bludgeons had. Oh, what a crash!
Stunned are my ears: such dreadful thunder-bolts.

"And he upon the sea, in boat so small!
Oh, spare him, winds and waves: ye spared him once.
Save him, ye Powers divine,—I love him so!
Save him, ye holy saints of Paradise,
And shield him with your wings,—my love, my love!"
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms:
So read the *Myrtle* (not the *Laurel*) *Leaves*.

Next morn she early rose, and sought the shore:
Closely she scanned the waves tumultuous.
No sign of life, not e'en a drifting spar.

Along the strand she walked where way there was.
His lifeless form would almost welcomed been,
So great the pain of her perplexity.
"Such, such is life!" she mused;" two days ago,
(But oh, how far away they now do seem,)
Sunshine I had, my love, and happiness;
To-day all gone: nought left but misery.
But life is not eternity: sweet thought!
The chain that binds our souls to earth death breaks,
And angels wing us up to Paradise.
Oh, heart, weep, weep no more; in God have faith.
Perhaps up there my darling love I'll meet."

She walked along the shore, in thought absorbed,
Much in her mind his talk 'bout destiny.
"It does seem so! and yet how can it be?
If fate rules all where then is Heaven's God?
Oh, mystery, your riddle who can solve?
In youth my mother died of broken heart,
My father in his height of fame disgraced,
Of battle's wounds did Legion's father die,
While yet in youth; his mother dear, like mine,
E'en in the spring of life dying of grief;—
Legion, himself, perchance, dead 'neath the sea,—
And I? alas, when may my death not be?
If fate ruled them do Thou, oh God, rule me!
No, no, there is no fate,—no destiny:
Chance does not rule, nor yet necessity,
But one supreme, all-wise and only God;
And He is good,—or love He'd never made."

A daisy growing near she stooped and plucked,
Snow-white and fresh. "Sweet flower of innocence!
From infancy thy prettiness I've loved.
My saintly mother smiled thine eye to see,
And of thee made bright garlands for my head.
In French she said 'daisy is margaret,—
Emblem of beauty and of innocence';
That 'margaret did also mean a pearl,

Emblem of purity'; and as my name
Was Margaret she prayed all these I'd be.
Perhaps, some day—" Her words stopped suddenly,
Oh, what a picture of a saint was she!
In form and feature, perfect; full of grace;
Love, beauty, innocence in her made one.
In angel's garb through Heaven's gates she'd passed
Eluding e'en archangel's scrutiny;
And one who'd sworn that she an angel was
In Heaven or earth would have stood justified.
Oh, that such heart should ever anguish feel,
Such eyes the fountains be of sorrow's tears.

Days came and went—Legion her only thought.
"He said 'his King and country own his sword,'
And he 'must rally where their flag doth wave.'
Alas, that any 'sword' was ever made,
Dagger, or spear, or other deadly blade.
Invented first, no doubt, to slaughter beasts,
Then used to stay assaults by savages,
And now by Christian men 'gainst brothers drawn,
Shedding the peaceful blood of innocence,
And turning love and joy to war and hate."
So did she muse, looking upon the sea.

"As for the 'King' he is my enemy,
And to my father has injustice done.
No 'king' I'll own—unless Legion returns
Wearing the royal crown of perfect love;
Then on my bended knees his hand I'll take,
And to him as my king allegiance swear.
Except the Christ no other king I'll have.

"His 'country called,' he said, and forced he was
That call to heed, and 'rally 'round her flag.'
What 'country' is that calls I scarcely know:
So long to me has she her back kept turned
I've most forgot her features and her voice.
Would all the world one happy country was,

Christ its sole king, and love its only law!
No country have I but where Legion is:
Where he abides my country is and home;
By his dear side there is my Paradise,
And other where I neither want nor love.

"What 'flag' does mean I hardly realize;
But flags and creeds, my father says, have made
Those enemies who otherwise had loved.
Alas, the schemes shrewd Satan has devised
Upon this earth to keep his kingdom strong,
And of good brothers make bad enemies.
Love's flag alone has my allegiance,
And love's the only creed my heart does know.
King, country, flag and creed—oh, what a world
Of crime and woe in those four words summed up!
What seas of tears and blood they've cost mankind—
Because misused. Some day, some happy day,
When Christ's millennial reign shall usher in
That new earth and new heaven, his flag and creed
Will every heart with holy love inspire;
His kingdom then the country of us all,
With love and peace and joy, our Paradise.
Oh, would that day were come, and Legion here!

"But fail what will Legion will never fail.
To go, he said, was his fixed destiny,
And go he must:—and he, alas, has gone.
To come again is his fixed destiny,
And come he must: So some day come he will.
This truth I surely feel within my soul,
And on this rock of faith I found my hope,
And no despair shall ever pluck it thence.
Eastward he sailed away upon the sea.
Who saileth eastward will some day return:
So saith the proverb, and I feel it true.
Who saileth westward will no more return
For never from the west comes back the sun,
While from the east returns he every day,
So from the east Legion will yet return."

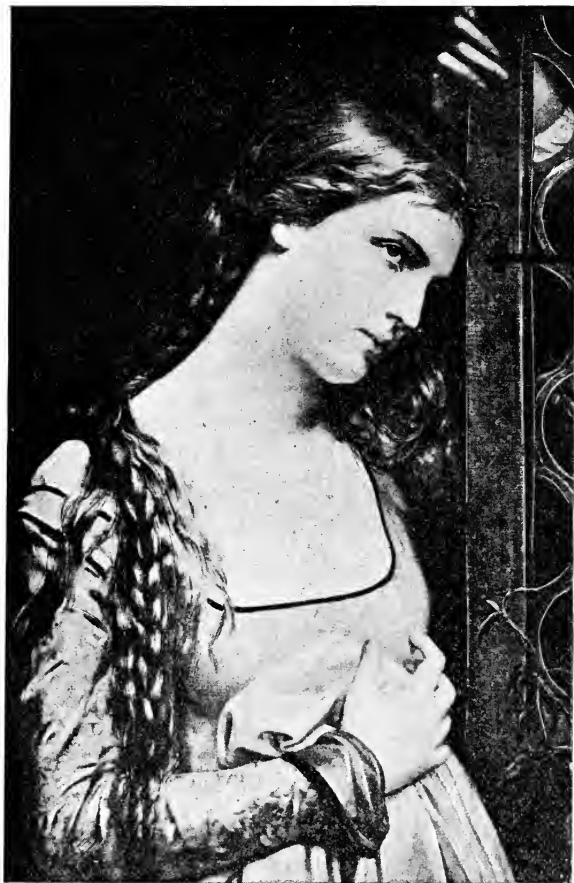
CANTO 2.**The Maid Confesses to her Sire.**

"Why seems my child so sad?" inquired the Sire,
Who long had seen depicted on her face
The signs that grief upon her heart did gnaw.
Then full confession did the Maiden make,
E'en from the moment first the Youth she saw
Down to the moment last his boat she watched
Fade from her gaze upon the eastern sea.

Seemed much perplexed the Sire, and oft he frowned,
As she her little drama did relate.
Some time he pondered on the strange events;
Then straightening suddenly his verdict gave:
"No wrong you've done, my child. At first I felt
A glow of wrath—at him, not you, my child;
But when the facts I do consider full,
Recalling that no confidant you have,
No mother whom your secrets you might tell,
And what a private thing love ever is,
Nature your only guide and counselor,
Knowing no law but what within your heart
Your God has writ,—and He doth no wrong write,—
Instead of fault to find, or blame to lay,
Surely discreet has been your every act,
And worthy of your mother have you been."

"But father, blame not him!" implored the Maid.
"Twas not his fault upon our island shore
He by that storm was cast, a shipwrecked Youth;
And found by me half dead upon the beach.
What could I do but try his life to save?
And what could he but eat the food I took?
His every act proved him a gentleman,
His every word was perfect courtesy,
His clothing showed he was of high degree.
How sweetly of his mother did he talk.
Sure, father, never man so good, so kind,

So high of mind, so pure of heart and soul;
And having in his veins a hero's blood,
What could he do but seek afar for fame?"



The Maid musing in Grief.

Greatly excited by such thrilling words
As "son of hero seeking fame," quickly he asked:
"What hero? tell me more: his history give."
Then told she that a Legion was this Youth,
And how his sire, while battling for the King,
Was wounded unto death; but from the field
By a heroic friend was bravely borne;
How of his many wounds at last he died;
And how himself to prove worthy such sire
The Youth did long himself to make a name.

By her narration all electrified
The Sire arose, and gesturing walked about.
"My comrade's son I do believe he is,"
Cried he. "No other Legion ever lived
In all the world: perfect 'fore God and man.
In time of peace sweet as a woman's love,
But on the battle-field no fiend from Hell
In valor or in strength could equal him.
The day I rescued him lay thick around
The dead he'd slaughtered with unaided arm.
The Knights of old, Roland and Oliver,
Baldwin and Guy, Godfrey and Lion-heart,
Have duplicates in valor and renown,
But nowhere lives brave Legion's duplicate,—
Unless a son." "Why father, how you talk!
That you're the friend who bore brave Legion off
The field, nursed him till death, then buried him?"
Excitedly she asked, grasping his arm,
And in his face looking all eagerly,
"My child, I do indeed believe I am.
Never the lightning strikes the same thing twice,
Never such name and deeds did happen twice,
Though marvellous the story that you tell.
What more said he about his father's friend?"
"No more, but somehow in his narrative
He for that friend such great regard did show
I thought thereof I'd question him, but on
He talked; and oh, so like a dream it was

Right now I hardly know 'twas actual,
But sometimes in my heart do think, perhaps,
I still do dream, and will some day awake."
"You cared for him,—but did he care for you?"
"Oh, father, know I not for certainty.
And sure sometimes my heart I fear will break
Because I know it not; but oh, his smiles,
His eyes, his tones, his gentle loving ways,
Spelled love unto my soul. Yet never word
Of love spake he, never my hand he touched,
But seemed to think that I too holy was
For human love, or aught but reverence.
Fame, he complained, called him from me away.
And bound he felt to hearken to her call."
"Like Legion's talk sounds that," exclaimed the Sire.
"Of a return what did he ever say?"
"Never a word nor hint; but in my heart
I feel some day he will." Then fell her face
Upon her father's arm, and long she wept.

"Love her he does, I'm sure:" so thought the Sire.
"But thinking her for life condemned to live
Upon this little isle, her sire disgraced
And banished by his country and his King,
This Youth, all Legion-like, could not afford
With my dear child to wed, and fame forego.
No doubt the force of love he fully felt,
And knew my child did fairly worship him;
But youth of honor, like great Legion's son,
His love he throttled, and for sake of both
Into the world went back, to fight for fame.
Oh, Legion, Legion, how like thee thy son!
But if he lives return some day he will.
Love and a Legion's honor back will bring
To Redenfayn this Youth—and they will wed;—
And may that mother's curse at Willowdale
Be by some greater charm all nullified!"
A moment thought the Sire, then musing said:
"Who sails to eastward some day will return,

Who sails to westward bids a last adieu:
Legion to eastward sailed: he will return."

His absence uncomplainingly she bore,
Nor censure cast by thought, or word, or deed,—
While she almost to death his absence mourned.
So perfect to her eyes, and heart, and mind,
Was he, no wrong she saw in aught he did.
'Twas fate that dragged him off, and destiny
That from her side kept him across the sea.
For he a Legion was, and foreordained
To glory and to fame; but some bright day
Return he would, and claim her for his bride.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.
Not Ariadne lone on Naxos isle,
Deserted by brave Theseus whom she's saved
From jaws of Minotaur, more deeply grieved
For her departed lord, nor oftener prayed
For his return unto her loving arms.
When out of Eden forced, Adam and Eve
Did nothing take away but grief and love:
So grief and love have mates been ever since,
And they who love the most the most must grieve.

CANTO 3.

The Land of Gloom.

The Land of Gloom, where souls in sorrow dwell,
Midway between the dark Abyss of Death
And the bright Mountains of Felicity.
There shines no sun; black clouds the sky shut out;
There winds are wails, and tears are dews and rains;
There breaths are sighs, and hearts feed on their thoughts—
Sweet thoughts of happy days forever gone;
Sad thoughts of things they hoped some day might be,
But which, oh woe! did never come to pass.
Sorrow, like a vile leech within the heart,
Sucks out the very blood of life and joy.

The Land of Gloom by willow trees hedged 'round,
Hemlocks and cypresses; sickly the grass;
No shrubs but sage, ghost flowers the only blooms,
Briars and poison vines on ruined homes,
In every path thistles, cactus and thorns.
Here grow the upas trees, that every thing
Do wither in their baleful influence.

The streams, what few there are, through marsh and mud
Move sluggishly within this Land of Gloom,
And full soon sink 'mong noxious vines and weeds.
Thick fogs and mists, and frigid atmospheres,
The blood and bones make cold, and chill the heart,
And nought is there that comfort gives or cheer.
Not griefs alone the Land of Gloom frequent;
But cancers, fevers, palsies, leprosies,
Malarias, ulcers, and consumptions dire,—
All lingering ailments and deformities,
No medicine can cure, no hope relieve.

On every side the caverns of Despair
Forever ope their portals, black and wide,
While from within come groans, and wails of woe.
Therein roost harpies vile which thither drag
Those souls whose hopes have all forever fled.
Vultures and bats, ravens and hooting owls,
The only birds that haunt the Land of Gloom;
The only beasts lean dogs and wolves, that howl
The long nights through all dolefully, like souls
To endless woe condemned. There startling shapes,
Like shades, glide to and fro, from cave to cave,
And tree to tree; and in the dark loom ghosts,
And many spectacles of mystery.
Lizards and snakes, vile toads and scorpions,
Chigres and ticks, spiders and centipedes,
Fleas, ants and moths, lice, roaches, bugs and worms,
Flies, hornets, wasps, mosquitoes, gnats — vile pests
Of every kind that sting, bite, fly or crawl,
Are everywhere, thronging the air and earth.

All that the eye offends, or ears, or nose;
Whate'er befouls, or taints, or makes unclean,
Cobwebs and dirt, mud, slime and carrion,
Flaws, cracks and specks, blots, stains and blemishes.

No seed of good doth sprout, nor crop doth bear,
No honest effort there success attains,
Returns no more bread on the waters cast,
All hearts ingrate, forgot all benefits,
There envy, jealousy, spite and revenge,
False rumors, scandals, backbites, eavesdroppings:
Friends never true, loves short and insincere,
Hate there her house has built and made her home,
And like a upas tree mars everything.
There discords, wrangles and unkind critiques,
There tears and sighs, dumps and despondencies.
All sleep is broken, marred is all repose.
Anticipation there for blooms has blights;
All days unlucky, evil all the stars.
There serfs and slaves, tyrants and autocrats,
There poor men overworked and underpaid,
There thrones and jails, handcuffs, fetters and bonds.
Honors for none, but infamies and shames.
No wish that's good does ever have its way.
All houses are but dens of misery,
And hard and full of thorns is every bed.
There every garment is with nettles lined,
And every hem filled full of lead or sand.
There live the indiscreet who bluntly blab
Those little facts that never need be known,
Reckless that thus one's pleasure they destroy:
(Contentment oft depends on ignorance.)
His uttermost each neighbor strives to make
All other lives, miserable at best,
More miserable still, by noxious sights,
Noises and smells, and all impediments.
For each act there, fixed times imperative,
With forfeitures and penalties besides;

No minutes, hours, nor days, of grace,
No ifs nor buts, no pardons nor excuse.
There woes join woes like black beads on a string.

CANTO 4.

Denizens of the Land of Gloom.

There traitors, thieves, liars and renegades,
Zealots, bigots, cranks and stern dogmatists,
Meddlers, marplots, carpers and termagants,
Clowns, croakers, scoffers, turncoats, atheists,
Tattlers, ranters, braggarts and sycophants,
Fops, pedants, bullies, poets, pessimists,
Scolds, misanthropes, witches and Ishmaelites,
Proud Pharisees and sad-faced penitents,
Whiners, grunters, growlers and children spoiled.
There sneers and taunts, satires and travesties,
The wit that stings, the humor that offends,
Gross boorishness, and vile vulgarities.
No sport but what to some one sorrow brings.

There seldom seen the angel-face of Hope,
And seldom heard her cheering utterance.
As ravens, crows and hawks bright birds drive off
So griefs and pains, sorrows and sufferings,
Scare from the heart the white-winged doves of hope;
And nought there roosts in full security
But croaking, black-winged ravens of despair.
Minds there like caves ever with darkness filled,
No ray of joy their depths e'er penetrates,
No bird of song or plumage bright there lives,
Only the owls and bats of dolefulness.
Lizards, serpents and snails of selfishness,
And slimy thoughts there make their fiendlike homes.
False accusation, slander and abuse,
Suspicion and distrust there ply their trades.
Suspicion hath her senses multiplied;
Eyes, ears and nose imagine or distort,

Subtle surmise the gnat suspicion lays,
That hatches out a maggot in the mind
Which eats into the heart of confidence
And turns what once was trust to unbelief.

This Land of Gloom seems 'neath the curse of God;
All joys depart from those who enter there.
Fortune and fame, love and the appetites,
The wretch forsake who this land makes his home.
The livelong night doth sigh and moan the wind,
While through the roof the rain incessant drops,
And when comes day it brings but chilling mists,
And snows or sleet, with wet and muddy roads.
Whatever is they long for something else:
When day it is, "oh, that the day were gone!"
When night it is, "oh, that the day were come!"
Whate'er they wish is worthless when possessed;
Whate'er they eat insipid to the taste.
There no one feels at home, however housed,
But longs for other where,—for any change.
Our only home is where our heart's at rest,
Whence when we go our feet of lead seem made,
But on return we long for eagle's wings,
Which when we reach our soul is satisfied,
And happy lolls upon the lap of ease:
Such home, alas, has not the Land of Gloom.

Beside the border of this Land of Gloom
Stretches the grim Desert of Discontent,
Peopled by those who're never satisfied,
Who yearn forever for that which is not,
And pine for what is unattainable.
Hate grieves because his victim's out of reach,
Love sighs because the lover is away,
The rich complain for want of appetite,
The poor lament for want of food to eat,
Ambition raves because his crown's not gained,
Envy looks sourly at another's joy,
The critic frowns because defects appear;

Unhappy ever are the covetous
Because of something they do not possess,
The pious moan at God's great leniency,
The wicked curse at His great stringency,
The young complain their way they cannot have,
The old regret their way they had too much,



In the Land of Gloom.

Some groan beneath the burdens of their wealth,
While others grieve for wealth they do not have,
Some wander homeless longing for a rest,
Some tired of home plan trips to other lands:
Thus many millions tire of what they have
While other millions grieve they have it not.
Religion or philosophy their guides
Some 'scape this Desert grim of Discontent;
While every day thither throng multitudes,
And thousands cross into the Land of Gloom.

A bitter sea within this Land of Gloom,
Like that called Dead in ancient Palestine,—

A sea of woe, and utter wretchedness :
Black-walled with lofty rocks, volcano-made,
Without or beach, or port accessible.
Upon this sea embarked nor oar nor sail,
Anchor nor compass has the voyager,
By dark clouds he forever compassed 'round,
By ceaseless waves hither and thither tossed,
By chilling winds blown ever to and fro,
And hopeless shipwreck certain soon or late.
One denizen'd within this Land of Gloom,
Whose surface ever slopes to that Abyss,
Few e'er escape unto the Hills of Joy,
But most over the awful precipice
Shrieking in vain fall headlong in the pit,
Or else are dragged by harpies to their caves
And there devoured by demons of despair.
Those hopeless souls that totter on the brink
Of that Abyss which bounds the Land of Gloom
See looming in the awful deeps below
The gates of Hell, in smoke and darkness wrapt,
And devils there waiting for human souls,
And spirits vile, unto damnation doomed.

Upon the borders of this Land of Gloom
The Maiden's spirit dwelt; oft forced within,
But rallying would just as oft escape
Across the border to the Neutral Land,
Where little joys and sorrows had their homes,
But no great grief nor great felicity.
Thus was her spirit saved from those foul fiends
That haunt the dens and caverns of despair,
Within the Land of Gloom: *so read the Leaves.*

CANTO 5.

The Maid's Lament.

Sad is a biting frost in summer time,
All lovely flowers in blackest death laid low;

Dire is a long eclipse of mid-day sun,
When in the sky no cloud a shadow casts;
Appalling is a cancer's deadly growth
To one just entering the joys of life; —
So to a maid by lover left forlorn:
Her flowers of ecstasy no longer bloom,
Her sun of joy all hid by clouds of gloom,
Her heart by sorrow's canker gnawed away.
Look where she will no ray of hope appears,
Go where she will no refuge can she find,
Think what she will no balm can she devise,
Do what she will the deed no solace gives.

Her days and nights the sorrowing Maid did pass
Disconsolate. Nought brought forgetfulness,
And respite never came, nor anodyne.
Like setting sun upon a cloudy day
Low hope was sinking in despair's dark sea.
What little joys her fleeting dreams brought forth
Like Hebrew babes were quickly massacred
By grim reality's Herodian sword.
Forever broken seemed her golden cup,
And spilled the sweet wine of her happiness.
Gone from its cage the pet bird most she loved:
Its cheery voice so sweet, its gentle eyes
So full of love, its ways so arch — all gone.
Thus from her heart welled forth her sad lament:

The Maid's Lament.

"The Land of Gloom my spirit walks,
No light upon my path;
No words I hear but sorrow's talks,
Here love no errand hath.

"A constant visitor despair,
Hope long ago has fled;
No moment joy with me doth share,
My happiness is dead.

"Dark clouds are ever in my sky,
No sounds but groans I hear;
No pleasant sights to charm my eye,
No bliss my soul to cheer.

"Beside my path no flowers bloom,
No prattling rills do flow;
My spirit seems beneath some doom,
And destiny my foe.

"No birds I see in tree or sky,
But buzzards, owls and crows;
No thing my heart to gratify,
No plant with beauty glows.

"No waters sweet, no cooling breeze,
No food that's good to eat,
My ear no notes of music please,
No path soft to my feet.

"Steeped is my soul in sorrow's dregs,
In gloom my heart doth dwell,
Once joys, my thoughts are now but plagues,
And on my life's a spell.

"Nowhere my mind a pleasure gleans,
And nought my days to bless;
My fancies are of funeral scenes,
My dreams but bring distress.

"My only love away has gone,
And with him all delight;
Nought can I do but weep and groan,
My Legion from my sight.

"So must I walk the Land of Gloom,
Among its funeral urns;
And death from grief must be my doom,
Unless my love returns.

"Oh, God, have pity on my woe,
My Legion's heart entreat;
Make him my anguish all to know,
And hither turn his feet."

CANTO 6.

The Cliff of Vigils Sad.

Suns rise and set; planets in orbits vast
Revolve; moons wax and wane; tides ebb and flow;
Change do the seasons; come and go the years;

And rise and fall great nations, and their works :
E'en time itself is always on the wing ;—
But love that's pure and true doth never wane ;
Once in the heart there it abides for aye,
Unmoved by time, and altered not by change.
No mine on earth, no grotto in the sea,
No star in heaven, no treasury in the world,
A gem contains so pure and rich and fair
As woman's love : a love that's not a blaze
Flaming in fury when by passion fanned ;
Nor fire of straw that flashes, and is gone,
Leaving but ashes black where once it burned.

Eternal is love's fire. The sacred flame
Of Rome, by vestal virgins kept, went out ;
The holy blaze preserved by Aztec priests
For Montezuma's sake, has ceased to shine :
The heaven-born fire of Ormuzd, that so long
And bright in Iran burned, no longer lives ;
The peak of Teneriffe, by God's hand lit
To light the ocean wide, no longer shines.
But love's all-hallowed fire when kindled once
In woman's heart, so ceaselessly its flame
Her constant spirit feeds it never dies ;
But lives while she doth live, and when she dies
Her path in lights unto the gate of Heaven,
And blazes there in beauty evermore.
'Tis said a lover's absence killeth love,
As absence of the rain doth blossoms kill ;
But when a woman once doth truly love
That love its roots and tendrils through her soul
Doth gently twine and interweave, until
So much her very being is engrossed
That come what may of fortune or of fate,
Be skies all bright or ever overcast,
Be friends in multitudes or foes in droves,
Be bells of merriment or funeral tolls,
Be weal or woe, roll years or centuries,
That love will never wholly die away.

Some little root or tendril will remain
The heart to waken, or the soul to thrill,—
In dreams, if not awake; some sight, some sound;
A leaf, a bird, a flower, a little word.
A song, a cloud, a book, a path, a wood,
Will work like magic on that sleeping love,
And rouse it up all fresh, and young, and fair:
And then that heart will sigh, that soul will groan,
A-thinking of those things that might have been.

Why were the song-birds hushed on Redenfayn?
Why ceased the curlew's call unto its mate?
Why kept the little squirrels in their holes?
Why looked the shells so lonely on the shore?
Why hung the flowers their heads so sad and low?
A thing of grief their winsome mistress was,
Smiling no more upon her darling pets;
Her eyes all blinded by the tears of woe.
But one most faithful was—a white sea-dove
She once found stranded on the ocean shore,
And nursed till strong. The isle it never left,
But always to her came when she did call,
And softly cooed, and from her fair hand ate.
Upon the cliff where they that night had sat,
In silence gazing on the moonlit sea,
And where so much loved he to sit and muse,
There every day sat she with heavy heart,
Looking through tears afar upon the sea,
The way he sailed upon the mighty main,—
Praying his boat might then and there return,
Loaded with love and happy days for her.

Hallowed that cliff seemed in her eyes and heart,
And in her thoughts a sacred place it was.
Hope on her right sat ever at her side,
As angel fair; rosy and full her cheeks;
Eyes blue and bright, and open always wide;
Soft, sweet and low her voice; loving her smile;
Her words the food that fed the Maiden's heart;

Long, soft and fine floated her flaxen hair,
And on her head a rainbow for a crown.
Often the Maid she kissed, and whispered low
Deep in her willing ears; and oft the Maid
Upon her bosom bent her weary head,
And by her lullabies was soothed to sleep.
On her left side was Fear, a toothless hag,
With pale and wrinkled face, and trembling limbs;
Her pop-eyes glancing ever all around;
Loud beat her heart, and upright stood her hair;
Cold was her blood, and frosty was her breath;
Broken her utterance, startling her tones:
Her words all happy thoughts drove from the heart,
And hope's bright flowers were withered by her look.
Over the Maid afar, but drawing near
At times, and motioning as though to strike,
Despair on vulture's wings sailed round and round.
Like demon's was her face, but pale as death's;
Her talons long, with poison on their tips;
Whome'er she struck their hearts her claws did pierce,
And life to them thenceforth was misery.

But never, not e'en in her deepest grief,
Those words of comfort did the Maid forget,
(Words by that Angel whispered to her soul:)
"Who sails to eastward some day will return,
Who sails to westward bids a last adieu.
Legion to eastward sailed: he will return."

Thus spent the Maid her days upon the cliff:
Her heart a shrine in which an altar stood,—
Her holy place, all consecrate to him.
High o'er this altar bright his image shone:
Her idol 'twas, with flowers of love wreathed round,
With many tears by her sad eyes bedewed,
And by her sighs perfumed. Upon her knees
In adoration there her lonely hours
She spent, thus happy in her wretchedness.
Here she nepenthe found,—a soothing balm,

Chief solace for the sorrows of her soul.
 Oft overhead the white sea-dove she heard,
 And ever to her heart it comfort brought,—
 She little thinking that its soothing coo
 Was by that Guardian Angel all inspired,
 To help her bear her woe until he came.
 Oft did she dream she saw him sailing back;
 And once she dreamed he landed on the shore,
 And begged her fly with him across the sea,
 But thoughts of her dear father chained her feet.



The Maid dreams of Legion's return.

Of hope or truth the *Laurel Leaves* said nought,
 Nought of that Angel, or that white sea-dove;
 And what herein of these is pictured forth
 The Scribe did from the *Myrtle Leaves* obtain,
 Or his imagination filled their place.
 The last lines of the *Laurel Leaves* portrayed
 The vulture of despair about to strike
 Into the Maiden's heart his poisonous claws,
 While just below an awful chasm yawned
 Wherein were demons waiting for their prey.

* * * * *

The Second Chasm in the Wreath.

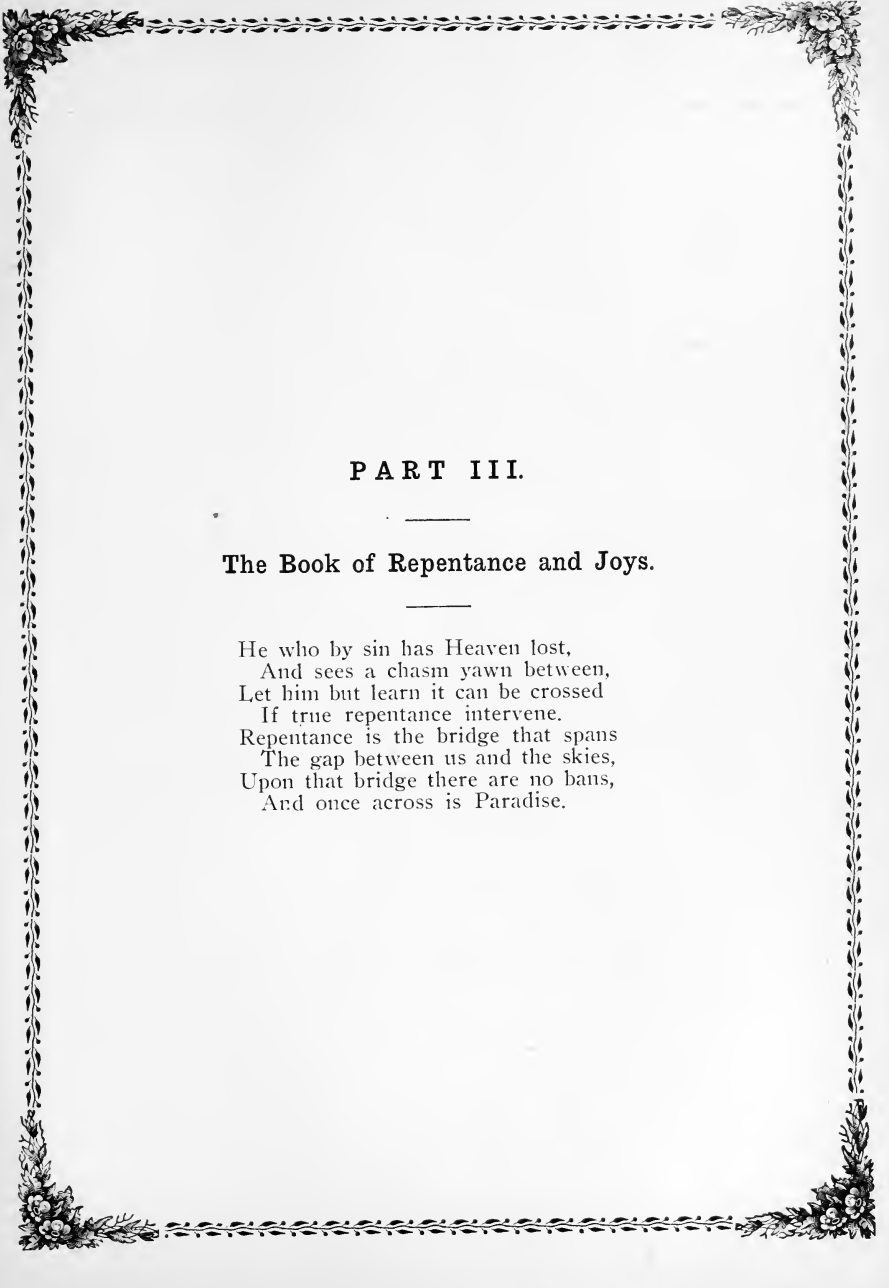
The chasm's reached: beyond, oh seek it all.
This side is sin, beyond is righteousness;
Here reigns ambition, yonder love is lord;
Here gilded misery, there happiness;
Here hell on earth, there Paradise regained.

Repentance is the bridge that spans the chasm;
And while rough, fragile and irresolute,
'Twill safely bear him to the better shore
Who hates the sin he's done, confesses all,
His faults regrets, all damages repairs,
And pardon begs, debased, on humble knees,
With tearful eyes and heart convulsed with grief.

But no weak soul can cross that dire abyss:
Courage it takes that shaky bridge to pass,
For awful yawn the darksome deeps below,
And Pride in armor clad stands as its guard.

Cross, cross, all ye who seek a Gilead;
There grows the balm, and the physician's there.
Here Hell's black banner casts o'er all a shade,
But Heaven's white flag shines bright on yonder shore.



A decorative border of leaves and flowers surrounds the page.

PART III.

The Book of Repentance and Joys.

He who by sin has Heaven lost,
And sees a chasm yawn between,
Let him but learn it can be crossed
If true repentance intervene.
Repentance is the bridge that spans
The gap between us and the skies,
Upon that bridge there are no bans,
And once across is Paradise.

CHAPTER XIII.

Joy Begins to Dawn.

PROEM.

The Scribe yearning to know what was on the remaining *Myrtle Leaves* is miraculously informed, and proceeds with the Poem. Legion, gashed with wounds received in battling for fame, finds himself in the hospital where his father died, and waited on by the priest who had nursed his father, and who bears a message to Legion from his father; and tells, also, about Strombold, the Maid's father, and about his heroism and noble nature. Legion, in the quiet of the hospital, reverts to the Maid, and succeeds in getting a letter to her, telling of his love and promising soon to visit her. This letter she joyfully receives, and makes a loving reply urging him to come soon if he wishes to find her alive.

CANTO 1.

Strombold's Incantations and Prophecy.

Strombold was in his den of sorcery.
From early youth he'd loved the recondite,
And longed to thread the mazes of the deep,
The riddles and enigmas of the wise,
The spells, and charms and runes of conjurers.
Books had he bought, often at heavy cost,
Of divinations and enchantments strong,
By studying which well versed he might become

In all the occult learning of the world,
In all that to philosophy was known,
In all the wonders of astronomy,
In chemistry's most marvelous mysteries,
In what the alchemist did claim to do,
And what astrology taught by the stars.

These books of magic to the isle he'd brought,
With chemicals, blow-pipes and crucibles,
Wherewith all mysteries to ferret out,
All nature's secrets to make manifest,
And to discover all that's knowable.
For years and years, from mid-day to mid-night,
These books he'd studied, and their rites performed,
Faithfully following their formulas,
Observing carefully prescriptions long,
Obeying all the mystic rules laid down
For finding charms and incantations strong
That men would bind, spirits and even fate,
And makes of nature's self a willing slave.
Gold had he tried to make of metals base,
Diamonds of common glass, and other gems
Of pebbles, rocks, gases, and chemicals;—
But all in vain. No spirit had he raised,
No law of nature bent unto his will,
No friend nor foe into his presence drawn,
No fiend of earth or Hell brought to his aid,
No spirit taught his will to execute,
No spell had phrased of words so magical
That when 'twas uttered what was wished was done.

Years had he spent trying the stars to read,
And learn the secrets of the universe,—
Anxious to see if any rules laid down
Germane to him, or to his family,
Their curious history would cipher out,
And forecast what for them was yet in store.

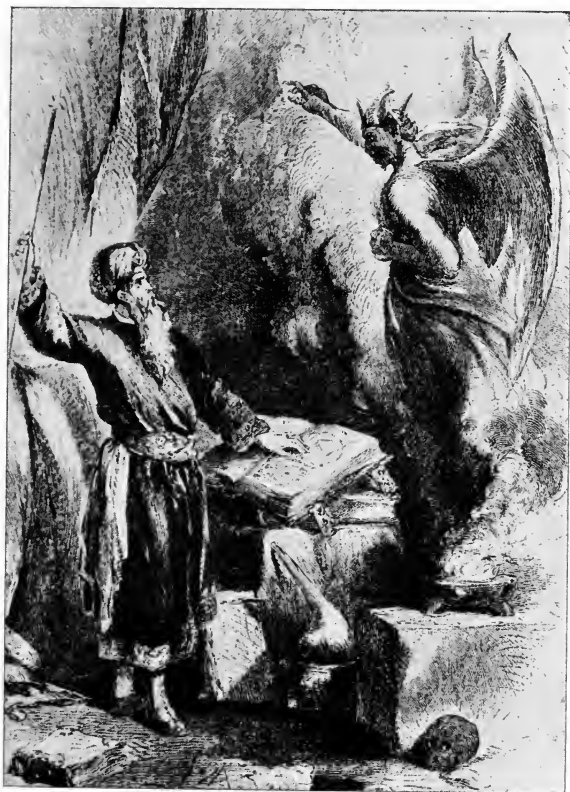
Herbs he'd distilled and wines had etherized,
Earths sublimated, stones and gems dissolved,

From flowers and fruits obtained their essences,
And from these essences a spirit got
That to the air exposed would disappear;
But life's elixir never yet he found,
Nor wine to make old age bloom back in youth,
Nor ichor into gods transfiguring men.
All profitless were his experiments,—
Except they made time hasten viewless by,
And filled with pleasure hours else full of pain,
Making his exile more than bearable.

While not quite sure conclusion had he reached
That in all things throughout the universe
A subtle force is viewlessly diffused,
That everything attracts or else repels,
That in their orbits make the planets move,
That towards earth's center draws terrestrial things,
That pulls the winds and clouds across the skies,
That heat and lightning is, and motion's cause,—
And that some day by man might harnessed be
All work to do now done by men or beasts.
This viewless spirit of the earth and air,
Working in love with matter and with mind,
A triple brotherhood, had all things made:
Their creatures temporal: eternal they.

And now had come the final test, supreme.
Amid his laboratory, Strombold stood,
His books and vessels lying loose around,
His last analysis before him spread
With charts and cabalistic sentences.
Near by fierce boiling in a large tureen,
(Its cover an inverted human skull,)
Was a decoction of most subtle drugs
And spirits thrice three times etherialized,—
Sufficient by all rules of alchemy
To raise a genius omnipotent,
When loud was said "*Emoc, tirips emoc!*"
His wand with his left hand high Strombold raised,

And on the charts and cabalistic words
His right hand placed. "By all these conjuries,
Thou spirit in that pot come forth I bid,



Strombold calls forth a Spirit.

Come forth, come forth; *emoc, tirips emoc!*"
Up rose the skull, and tumbled on the floor,
While out did rise a mass of smoke and steam,

Which took a demon's shape as up it climbed.
"Speak!" Strombold cried, "if thou have life and tongue,
And truly tell me who this Legion is,
And where, and if ever he'll come again."
No answer came: the smoke and steam had gone,—
And gone the demon of their stuff composed.
"So ends in smoke my studies and my toils!
These books are words and signs that nothing mean.
No ghosts there are, no spirits, and no fiends,—
Nought supernatural. Through chemistry
Gold may transmuted be from metals base,
And precious gems from gases crystalized;
Some liquor, too, perchance some day be made
Disease to cure and human life prolong;
But never will elixir be distilled,
Nor ichor found mankind to change to gods.
If ever life on earth is much prolonged
'Twill be through that mysterious potency
Which from that boiling pot pushed off the skull:
Not smoke nor steam I mean, for lifeless they,—
But that almighty force electrical
Which by its heat water expands to steam:
By seeing steam we think it does the work,
Little considering water is inert
Till moved on by some mighty living force.

"So, from my books and studies this I've learned:
That mind, matter and electricity
Eternal are, and rule the universe.
Doing all things: they made and ruled by God.
Such my conclusions! So, farewell, ye books,
Ye charts, pots, crucibles and chemicals!
Astrology and alchemy farewell!
Farewell, all conjurations and all spells!
Farewell, the weird, and supernatural!
Dreams are you all—or else impostures base;
And who on you relies, relies on nought,

For nought you are but cheats that lead astray.
On you no more my time I'll throw away.
There's more in prayer than in all conjury;
For every mind is with the sea of mind
Somehow in touch, and every thought and prayer
That sea affects, and thus works out its will.
Legion will soon return: too many powers
Are pressing 'gainst his will. His parents' wish,
My child's persistent prayers, my own desire,
All working on the ocean of the mind,
Will influences like to waves produce;
And these will widen out, spread and enlarge,
Until his heart is reached, and will controlled.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms:
So has God geared the world's machinery."

CANTO 2.

Good Father John.

Here closed the *Leaves of Laurel*—with a chasm.
Then did the Scribe recall that on the wreath
Were many myrtle leaves by him unread—
Leaves on a branch beyond the laurel stump,—
And much he grieved because of his neglect.

One day reclining on an ocean-beach,
Where in the summer throng the multitudes,
Thoughts came to him of Margie, on her cliff,
Gazing across the sea for Legion's boat;
And in his soul groaned he in agony
To know what her fate was, and what was his.
While longing thus a bright light filled his eyes,—
'Twas Yndafrene, maid of his Eden days.
And there that column was in Paradise,
That swinging *Wreath of Myrtle*, gemmed with flowers,
Above that wreath in orient pearls those lines:
"Where lives and rules the Hell-born love of power,

There yields and dies the Heaven-born power of love."
There was that *Laurel stump* whose bough beyond
The walls of Paradise had been cast out;—
And there that other branch of *Myrtle Leaves*,
With flowers gemmed, that brightest seemed of all,
And full of words,—unread by him before.
At once these words he read, or seemed to read,
Fair Yndafrene somehow assisting him.
Then music came: his eyes he opened wide:
There was the ocean-beach, and swimmers gay
Disported with the waves, in merry moods,
While on a stand a band of music played,
And all around were scenes of revelry.

Who further reads will read the happy words
That on those *Myrtle Leaves* so brightly shone,—
Distorted much by faults of memory,
And by imagination varied more.

* * * * *

The Youth had struggled hard fame's crown to win,
But what he wanted most was e'er beyond.
Glory from all he gained, but love from none;
For hate not love doth tread the trail of war;
While not for hate but love the Youth was made.

That curse of Willowdale its wrath did work:
All gashed with wounds, and weak from loss of blood,
Stretched on a bed in a rude hospital,
Himself at last he found, an aged priest
His only nurse, and sole companion.
"A face like yours somewhere I once have seen,"
The priest did say when stronger grew the Youth.
"Your name I pray you tell, and history."
"My name is Legion, I'm the type of hosts,"
Answered the Youth; "Legion of Shonbirg Hall."
His breast the priest did cross, a prayer he breathed,
His crucifix he kissed. "Brave Youth," he said,
"Where died your father?" "Somewhere near this town,"
Replied the Youth. "Oh, holy Mary, keep

Me safe from sorcery! One question more:
Your father's nurse was who,—if you do know?"
Inquired the priest, with earnest gaze and voice.
"Strombold a comrade brave, and father. John
A holy priest, did nurse and bury him,"
Answered the Youth. "Oh, holy Mary, can
All this be true? Young man, I'm father John!
With Strombold I your noble father nursed;
And when at last, in peace with God and Church,
He sunk to death, his heart fixed on his Christ,
With holy oil anointed him for Heaven,
And laid his corpse in consecrated ground.
You, then, his son! Yes, yes, his face you have.
How oft he talked of you. Much did he fear
Ambition you might tempt as him it did.
And me he begged if ever you I met,
Upon your head to place my priestly hands,
(As now I do,) and charge you—hearken not
To glory's Siren voice, the false fiats
Of fate to scorn, ambition's splendid pomps
And fame's inspiring trump to disregard,
As vanities, the cursed spawn of Hell.
All this now here I do; and on your head,
God's blessings pray, and Mary's, and the Saints'.
Your father's dying prayer never forget."

Then to his other work went father John:
"How strange," he thought, "that mother's fatal curse
At Willowdale, where the first Legion won
His name and fame, that all his progeny,
Like him should die while young in life and fame,
Until some Legion's heart, by shaft of pearl
Pierced through by some Varangian woman shot
(When he off guard no shield nor breastplate wore,)
From ways of war to paths of peace should turn.
Methinks somewhere I've heard, or read, or dreamed,
That 'mong the French a daisy's called a pearl,
Emblem of beauty and of innocence;
And so this fatal curse may only mean

That when a Legion's heart the love of Christ
Doth penetrate longer their lives will be:
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.
If so, no great calamity this curse,—
Yet like a cloud it hangs o'er Shonbirg Hall;
And if this Youth, now wounded near to death,
This curse should learn, or knowing grieve about,
'Twill drive him to despair, and end his life,
For without hope no sick man e'er gets well."

CANTO 3.

Legion Sends a Letter to the Maid.

To Legion's ears came coo of white sea-dove:
Then on his breast the locket's weight he felt,
Upon his heart he felt that single hair,
Within his soul a glow of happiness.
Oh, what a heavy load from off the heart
True love can lift with but a single hair!
Love is the ichor that doth fill the veins
With thrills of bliss that never wholly die—
Lingering like echoes sweet in memory,
E'en when life's tides are ebbing fast away.

His eyes the Youth did close, but not to sleep.
First on his father were his many thoughts;
Then on his mother, and her holy prayers;
Then loomed the Maid: how sweet yet sad her face!
How sweet yet sad his thoughts of her and hers!
Lastly to Strombold did his musing turn.
"Father," he asked, "where is brave Strombold now?"
"Banished he was, some ten long years ago,
To Redenfayn, a little ocean isle,
Where smugglers once within a cave of rock
A palace built, that was a fortress strong.
But he was innocent: designing men
The King deceived. A dying wife to kiss
Strombold without permit the army left:

Urgent her call. They made the King believe
He a deserter was, false to his oath."

"Oh, holy father," said the Youth, "I feel
Upon my soul a debt to Strombold due.
With me, some proper time, I pray you'll go
The King to see, and pardon beg in full
For Strombold, with his honors all restored."
"Most gladly will I go, for sake of you
And your most noble sire, whom I did love,
And for brave Strombold's sake, who's innocent."
The Youth then told about the ocean isle,
The Maid, his love, and why he did not stay.
"What lofty honor did your actions prompt!"
Exclaimed the priest. "How few that test have stood!
For your most righteous dealings with this Maid
The blessed Virgin, Holy Mary, will
Her blessing give, and make you happy yet."
"Oh, holy father, many grateful thanks!
Unto this Maid a letter I would send
To let her know I live, and bear her love."
"The missive give to me. I'll have it sent,"
The priest replied, "and have response returned."
Then to the Maid the Youth this letter wrote:
*"Margie, my darling love: Alive and well
I pray you are, and hope you love me still.
To make us happy, you, your Sire and me,
A plan I have that's certain of success.
You soon I hope to see, and take your hand,
Your sweet lips kiss, and call you mine.
Be of good cheer. Legion, your lover true."*

The priest a messenger produced, a serf
Most faithful: him the Youth the missive gave,
Told him what things to do, what words to say,
And promised great reward if safely he
The missive took, and back her answer brought.

CANTO 4.**The Maid receives Legion's Letter.**

Upon the cliff where he did use to sit,
And musing gaze upon the mighty sea,
Did sit the Maid, (and every day had sat
Since he had left,) looking through tears afar
Upon the billowy flood, hoping some day
A boat to see bearing him back to her.

That morn a strong presentiment she had
That some thing good to her that day would bring;

**The Angel inspiring the Maid.**

For oft and sweet did coo the white sea-dove.
That Guardian Angel had her heart prepared
By happy dreams for happy news that day.
Her eyes she strained to scan the distant sea,
And far upon its outmost rim she saw,
Or thought she saw, a speck that rose and fell.
Oh, how for eagle's eyes her heart did long,
Or eagle's wings to fly and learn the truth.

She knew a boat it was, yet knew it not;
Certain she was, but more than certain wished;
No doubts she had, but wanted further proof.
Both winds and waves set in towards the shore,
And inward, too, the swelling tide did flow.
A boat it seemed, yet not quite like a boat.
While it did aid her sight, the morning sun
Yet oft her eager eyes did dazzle much.
What lights and shadows, doubts and certainties,
Tumultuous, to and fro, rushed through her mind.
Nearer it came, by winds and waves propelled,
By tides borne in. At last, oh, what a joy!
Plainly against the sky it loomed—a boat!
But Legion not on board. Then quailed her heart
With dire forebodings multitudinous.

Down from the cliff towards the beach she sped,
Her heart all in her throat, her limbs all weak,
And almost gone her breath; but on she went,
And could not help but go. A power unseen
Did push her on. The boat was at the shore.

"What news bring you, good sir?" the Maiden asked:
Her peace she could not hold, the strain too great.

"My lord, Sir Legion, does a letter send
To Strombold's daughter, Maid of Redenfayn,"
Replied the boatman, rising to his feet.

"Are you the Maid?" "Oh, does he live?" she asked,
All eagerly, in agony to know.

"He lives, and bravely battles for his King."
Forbid he'd been to say the Youth was sick,
Lest she might grieve thereat. "Oh, thanks, good God!
And thanks, good sir, to you!" exclaimed the Maid,
Her face all wet with tears of gratefulness.

"Sir Legion bade me say, before has passed
Another year, he hopes to visit you
And tidings of great joy to bring you all.
Are you both well?—My lord doth wish to know,"
"Quite well my father, sir; but as for me,

Not well, not well." Emotion choked her words.
"This letter unto you he bade me bring,
And take your answer back. Some haste please make:
The tide begins to ebb; its help I need."
With weak and nervous limbs she hastened home,
Reading the letter as she hurried on.
"*You soon I hope to see,*" she read. "Oh, words
Of joy! how like a dream of ecstasy!"
"*And call you mine,*" further she read; "*You mine!*"
"Oh, thought delicious that he'll call me his,
And my hand take, and press his lips to mine!
How sweet these words, how precious to my heart!
'*Legion, your lover true.*' Sweetest of all
The last — and first, '*Margie, my darling love!*'
Oh, blessed words! my dreams are all fulfilled:
His '*darling*' I, and he my '*lover true.*'"

Reply she wrote: "*Legion, my only love;
My soul your letter fills with joy supreme.
With grief I'd soon been dead, had it not come —
And yet will die, if you do linger long.
Your boat for answer waits beside the shore.
Oh, do come back to me; come very soon.
No more I've strength, and time and heart to write.
Come very soon. To live till you do come
I'll try my best, for oh, how I do yearn
To see you once again before I die,
Legion, my love: so come; make no delay.*"
All nervously the sheet she folded up,
Failing her name to sign, or date to give,
For great emotions wholly mastered her.
Back to the boat she went as best she could,
And to the messenger her answer gave,
Without a word. His boat he seaward turned
And sailed away. Then slowly sat she down,
Her thoughts all in a maze, watching the boat
Until far in the east it disappeared.

Who sails to eastward some day will return.

CHAPTER XIV.

Legion's Allegorical Visions.

PROEM.

While suffering from his wounds, and weak in health, Legion has visions of mystic significance, which his Guardian Angel aids him to interpret. He sees a scene of Paradise and angels, representing the power of love; and sees this scene destroyed and pictures of blood and woe and ruin, representing the love of power. He sees a hall filled with statues made by demons, among them the People's Idol, Fraud, Falsehood and Ambition. He sees, also, looming in Hell the Obelisk of Fame, its banner red as blood and shaped like a sword, with the word "ambition" on it. Pondering on these visions it began to occur to him that his ambition was leading him to do what Hell most honored, his Guardian Angel suggesting these thoughts.

CANTO 1.

The Power of Love: the Love of Power.

With all his enemies the King made peace,
His troops disbanded, and his vassals freed.
But of his wounds the Youth not yet was cured.
Hot was his blood, and fevered was his brain,
Fast beat his pulse, and wandered far his mind.
Closed were his eyes—another world appeared:
There dulcet notes he heard, and merry tones.

His eyes he seemed to ope, and lo! a scene
Of loveliness. Angels were everywhere,
On land, in air; a thousand bright-winged birds
Sang sweetly all around; a thousand vales
Wound through the grassy lands; a thousand isles
Shone in the silver seas; on every hand
Trees, flowers and shrubs, luxuriant grew and bloomed;
Making a scene as fair as Paradise.
On every face the beams of happiness,
Peace ruled the seas, and mirth the isles and vales,
While sweetest symphonies the air did fill.
Upon the green great troops of angels danced,



Angels Dancing on the Earth.

With merriment and songs: their chorus was,
"The power of love! behold, the power of love!"
As danced, and laughed, and sung, these creatures bright,
There came an awful crash,—and all was dark.
Loud thunders rolled o'erhead, most awfully,
Fierce lightnings flamed, and tempests raged afar.
Around mid streams of blood pale corpses lay,
Upon its mother's breast an infant crawled,
Seeking its food: a knife was in her heart.
Complaints and sighs and groans, curses and threats,
Drove other sounds away. Along the plains

Lay ruined cots, and burning palaces.
Here rotted grain within the roofless barns,
There in the furrow stood the rusting plow,
And yonder people dead for want of food.
Then shouts arose, drums rolled, and bugles blew,
Whereat came dancing on the scene a crowd
Of headless skeletons with murdered girls
Whose wounds flowed blood, and piteous shone their eyes.
Then burning cities flamed upon the plains,
And nations moaned their happiness destroyed.
The while grim War, on human blood all drunk,
With fire and sword made havoc everywhere.
Now from the sky came in low monotone,
"The love of power; behold, the love of power!"

Upon a ghastly heap of human bones,
By *ignis fatuus* lit, a scarlet sash,
And crown of gold did lie, with jewels set;
Near by a naked sword upon whose blade
In blood was writ, *"Ambition's only Law."*
And just above, depicted on the wall,
Or else a scene of woe in deepest Hell,
He knew not which, was a great conqueror
Tormented by the damned whom he on earth
Had slain or robbed, imprisoned or distressed,
He now the victim of his victims' rage.
Upon his left a cave with darkness filled,—
Darkness so black it did a substance seem.
There Silence had her loneliest haunt and shrine,
While Secrecy with hand upon her lips,
Low in a corner crouched, wrapped in a cloak.
Despair, Revenge, Treason and secret Hope,
Young Love and pale-browed Thought were seated there:
While fierce Ambition paced the cave in frowns.
All thought themselves unseen and quite alone,
And all were busy with their hopes and plans.

CANTO 2.

Hell's Hall of Frauds.

Then came a sudden change: a hall appeared,
Where sculptors worked on graven images;
The Hall of Frauds, where devils wrought deceit.
There Freedom charming stood, upon her head
The cap of liberty, upon her shield
An eagle with spread wings, within her hand
A broken shackle and a shattered lock.
The Youth peeped 'neath her cap, and lo, her face
Was Faction's own; her flowing robe he raised,
Alas, upon the necks of slaves she stood.

An image near, in ermine robes all clad,
A pair of golden scales did hold aloft;
A drawn sword at her side and on her lap
The Book of Laws: Justice was she named,
But in her bosom carried she a bribe,
And in her heart was partiality.
The People's Idol showed his dingy dress:
Open his hands; all wreathed with smiles his face;
Upon his breast a glass, bearing these words:
"A plain man I, and shov' to all my heart."
The Youth looked in — that glass a mirror was
That beautified his face. "So 'tis," he said;
"Most pleased are men with those most like themselves;
And they who've most deceit most praises win."

With gentle light and influence serene,
Hope's upward beaming eyes the Hall illumed.
Sweet as a Siren's were her honied tones.
*"Hope casts a spell of inactivity
On millions who would otherwise be great,"*
The fiend remarked whose hands the statute graved.
Upon his left a milk-white virgin stood,
And smiled divinely sweet,—a very saint.
Within her hands the Holy Book she held.
A pearl-set lily and a diamond cross

Demure upon her naked breast she wore.
The Book the Youth did ope—'twas but a box
And rings did hold, letters of love, and flowers,
Inmixed with ribbons bright, and coins of gold.
Her face he scanned: lo, 'twas Hypocrisy
Concealed behind the mask of Holiness.

Fraud's image in the center shining stood:
Of face most fair, of form symmetrical,
Yet arch-fiend he of all the universe,
Of Satan oldest son, and best beloved;
His mother that old hag, Primeval Sin.
In his right hand were hollow promises,
Sounding like truth all charming to the ear:
His left an apple held, as red as blood,
Exceeding fair to sight, and sweet to smell,
But in its heart a vile worm had its nest;
One pocket held a porriard, long and keen,
The other many coins as bright as gold,
But all were galvanized and counterfeit.
Fraud uses many artful practices,
Snares, pitfalls, baits, decoys and statagems:
He honeys the seducer's words, and makes
The innocent believe the lies he tells,
And promises he makes. Fraud helps the knave
To rob the widow of her little all,
And make the friendless orphan penniless.
Fraud aids the heartless swindler to deceive,
And makes what's false assume the tints of truth.
The cheat, the quack, the shyster and the rogue,
Impostors, sharks, jugglers and diplomats,
Are all her agents, and confederates.
Most of the wrongs in speech and writing done,
Most of the tears by poverty poured forth,
Most of the acts that wrongfully change wealth,
When all is known are proved the work of Fraud.
So mused the Youth, as he Fraud's statue scanned.

Near Fraud an image stood, diminutive:

All front and face, no head, body nor legs,—
Thin as of canvas made, but seeming thick.
Falsehood it was: no substance in its frame,
Nothing but aspect, face and lineament;—
No flesh, no muscles, bones nor viscera.
Out of its mouth went words, words thin as air.
The coinage of the mind are words: some bear
Truth's image and her superscription plain,
And current pass at par with gods and men;
All other words bear falsehood's effigy,
The currency of hypocrites, and Hell.
Facts are the bones of which truth's body's made:
In Falsehood's image neither facts nor bones.
Discrimination highest wisdom is:
It looks behind the mask, beneath the paint,
Before drinking tastes, before eating smells,
Files a suspicious coin, probes to the bone,
Upon appearances alone acts not,
Mistakes not zeal for truth, nor sound for sense,
Before it acts fully investigates,
Before decisions hears full argument,
And to conclusions crawls, not blindly jumps:
So thought the Youth, pondering on what he'd seen.

Before that Hall Ambition loomed supreme,
In most resplendent majesty; divine —
Almost; but pale his cheek, and cold his eye.
Across his brows were furrows deep of care.
Upon his head a crown effulgent blazed
Enchanting all who saw its magic beams.
Of royal purple were his robes of state,
And on the thrones of kings he stood sublime.
But 'neath his feet the Youth saw murdered men,
Fragments of broken laws, and oaths forgot,
Beside which Misery crouched, and grim Despair.
His royal robes these horrid scenes all hid.
In his right hand a jeweled scepter shone;
His left held forth Fame's fruit,—golden without,

Ashes within. "All finished!" cried a voice.
"His name is Legion: he's the type of hosts!"
Then from the sculptors' throats burst loud applause,
Till shook each pillar, arch and pavement stone
Of that huge Hall of Frauds. Hope's statue fell,
And o'er the floor its fragments scattered wide,—
The only statue there devoid of fraud.
His eyes the Youth here shut a while,—to think:
Fraud and Ambition seemed so close of kin.
His Guardian Angel did his spirit touch
The truth to see: *so read the Myrtle Leaves*.
No image there of Truth, or Love, or Faith;
None of Good Will, Right or Sobriety,
And none of Honesty or Innocence:
Whereon the Youth did ponder, till occurred
The thought that these all demons did abhor.
And then Ambition's name was "Legion: he
The type of hosts"—and that meant *him*!
No bolt of thunder could have shocked him more.

A mountain high seemed plain before his eyes;
Upon its top the Christ, while at His side
Ambition stood in Satan's brightest guise,
Offering Him, with many tempting words,
And pledges, all the kingdoms of the world,
And all their glory and magnificence—
If Jesus would but bow and worship him.
Then in his soul the Youth did truly know
Ambition was but Satan in disguise,
And who ambition loved worshiped the Fiend:
Whereat the Youth was shocked and horrified.

CANTO 3.

Hell's Obelisk of Fame.

Just then a mighty curtain seemed to rise,
And far below he saw the deeps of Hell.
Amid a surging sea of roaring flame

Up loomed a rock no heat could mar nor melt,
Whereon was reared a towering obelisk
Of dazzling sheen, Hell's tribute to the men



Ambition tempting Christ.

Of earth whose deeds to Satan gave most joy.
Their names depicted were in letters black

As ebony,—the names of kings and queens
On earth deemed great, the names of popes and priests
Who bigots were, and martyred holy men,
For sake of Church, but not for sake of Christ;
Names of philosophers who falsehood taught;
Names of great conquerors, who filled the earth
With blood and ruin, poverty and tears,
And widows made, and orphans numberless;
Names of law-givers who by wicked rules
The poor oppressed, and took men's rights away.
Names of great demagogues, who cursed the rich
And to the poor promised prosperity,
Inciting them to riot and to theft,—
But leaving them, at last, for bread to starve,
In jails to languish, or on gallows die.

Such they to whose exalted infamy
Was dedicate Hell's Obelisk of Fame.
These the great champions of iniquity,
Whom devils praise, and goblins glorify.
These they whom pride and false ambition made
Curses to men far worse than all the plagues,
Dragons and beasts that John saw scourge the earth
In the Apocalypse of God's revenge.
Betokening the motive prompting men
On earth to do the deeds of Hell, high o'er
This tower of infamy floated a flag
Of blood-red flame, shaped like a mighty sword,
Upon whose blade in letters black one word,
“*Ambition*,” and, as waved that flaming sword,
Wide over Hell, goblins and imps danced high,
Rejoicing o'er that most accursed word
Which had the earth so oft made desolate,
And most had done Hell's deeps to populate.
But while the names of these Hell-serving men
Were honored thus in the Abyss, the men
Themselves were in the Cave of Carnage cast,
One of Hell's deepest pits, all filled with blood
As hot as fire,—their only company

Huge scorpions, vampires and lizards vile,
Tarantulas, great wasps and centipedes,
Serpents and hornets, chigres, fleas and lice,
Base murderers, and birds and beasts of prey,
And all the vermin of the land or sea
That live on blood, or mar the peace of men;—
Thus showing that, while Satan loved their deeds,
Their treason praised, their names immortalized,
Them he despised as traitors to their race.
Some treason love, but traitors all despise.
Odious the birds that their own nests befoul.

Legion much marvelled at such startling scenes,
And marvelled more that he so readily
Each scene interpreted: little he thought
His Guardian Angel helped: *so read the Leaves.*

When he awoke long time in doubt he was
Whether he'd dreamed, or what he saw was real,—
Each scene so plain, its meaning so distinct.
New thoughts within his heart began to sprout.
Himself he saw as in a mirror plain,
Led by ambition devils' deeds to do.



CHAPTER XV.

Legion Repents.

PROEM.

Restored to health, Legion resolves to make one more search for fame, by following the paths of peace; but being defeated while doing a righteous act is much discouraged. An old man counsels him to abandon his search for fame, telling him that true fame, herself, searches out those worthy of her crowns; and advising him to follow the guidance of love. Pondering on this counsel he sees things in a new light, and repents all of his resolves, repudiates ambition, and casts away all thoughts of fame, his Guardian Angel encouraging him. Then he was directed by a vision to join the crusade in expiation of his sins. Thereupon he aids the Emperor to capture Jerusalem and redeem the Holy Sepulcher from the infidels. While in Jerusalem he dreams of a white sea-dove that sings a song reproving a lover who had deserted her, and then—turns into the Maid, seated upon the cliff, looking through tears across the sea. Cut to the heart Legion resolves at once to return to Europe, see the King, get a pardon for Strombold, and hasten with it to Redenfayn.

CANTO 1.

Legion's Last Struggle for Fame.

To health and strength once more restored, the Youth
Discarding further thoughts of fame through war,
But not content all glory to forego,
Some virus of ambition still extant,
Resolved the golden dome of Fame to seek
By following the bloodless path of Peace,
Not willing longer human lives to wreck.
By sturdy foes beset, by friends not helped,
Slowly his way he worked amid the throngs.
Once did Fame's temple gleam before his eyes,
But soon a mighty mountain intervened.
In his beclouded soul light seldom shone,
And then but memories of the island Maid,
Whose letter, by some fate, he'd ne'er received.

"Hurra! the People's Idol!" cried a voice.
A man sped by 'mid thund'rous shouts and cheers.
The Youth had seen him in the Hall of Frauds.
"Deceit!" he cried, the imposture to expose.
A hundred hands threw him adown the steep,
And in a moment all he'd gained was lost.
That curse of Willowdale its wrath did work.
His eyes he raised: behold, Fame's dome of gold,
And almost there the "People's Idol" was:
"So fraud succeeds, and merit is disowned.
Why did I speak?" he said. "Oh, cruel fate!"
Weeping he tried back to the road to climb,
But every limb he grasped did break or bend,
And every bush was by the roots pulled up,
And every rock gave way beneath his feet.
"Useless your toil, my son," a kind voice said.
He turned: a gray-haired man was standing near.
"Who seeketh Fame's bright dome seeketh a myth,
A mere mirage, a fabric of the brain.
Wicked the glory that in blood is writ.
While fresh the blood, transplendent shines thy name,

But when it dries all black it turns—and stinks!
The truly great Fame seeks herself with smiles,
And drops upon their heads her laurel crown:
They know it not, and little do they care;—
But all the world beholds, and shouts for joy.
Ambition's paths are one vast labyrinth,
And selfishness its loathsome minotaur.
The more our steps the more our danger is.
Without the Ariadnean thread of love
We fill the monster's maw—in glorious.

To have a shrine within a nation's heart,
Built up by sacrifice and humane deeds,
By valiant conduct in the cause of right,
This is true fame, in sight of men and God.
Grand is the spectacle of hero armed
In shining mail, battling with all his might
For cause deemed dear, against superior force,—
But keeping e'er in mind his own renown;
Yet grander far in angels' eyes the sight
Of youthful soul, with truth's own weapons armed,
Sternly contending for the cause of right,
And fighting wrong where'er it shows its head,
Eager for nought but man's eternal good,
And of himself wholly oblivious.
Fame's a mere shining bubble in the mind,
That takes the form of what we most do crave.
And ever charming seems, just overhead,
Almost in reach, and certain to be had—
Yet never wholly in our eager grasp.
And e'en if grasped an empty bubble is
With nothing filled but air and noxious gas,—
And that invisible, intangible.
Seek Love, my son, and she will guide you right,—
E'en though her footsteps lead to Calvary."

CANTO 2.

The Youth's Repentance.

Rough is the pathway of adversity,
But to repentance 'tis the shortest road;
And unto Heaven doth repentance lead.

"A hundred lose where one no better wins,
Their losses go to make his crown of fame;
A thousand heroes go through blood to death
That one no braver may a gold star wear;
A million people 'neath taxation groan
That one no worthier a throne may have.
Ten million fishes swarm the ocean's deeps
That one huge whale may huger grow and live.
Thus selfishness is ever all for self,
Absorbing all in reach, returning nought,
And nothing caring for another's good."
Thus thought the Youth, and bowed his head in grief.
Ambition's spell had gone, in tears dissolved,
And Fate's tough bonds burst off his swelling soul.
"Oh, God, oft in my soul your voice I've heard,
But stubborn was my will. My father's words
Henceforth I'll heed; the visions in my dreams
I'll hearken to. Yes, yes, supreme is God,
And fate but His decree. I face about
This hour. Ambition I repudiate,
And fame and glory brand as vanities.
Not for myself, but for my fellow men
Henceforth I'll work, and in their happiness
And gratitude find all the joy I wish."
His Angel was at work: *so read the Leaves*.
Then these words in his soul he seemed to hear:
"True fame it is to have your portrait hung
High in the holy place of all good men,
And Heaven's blessings prayed upon your head
By those your hand and heart have happy made."

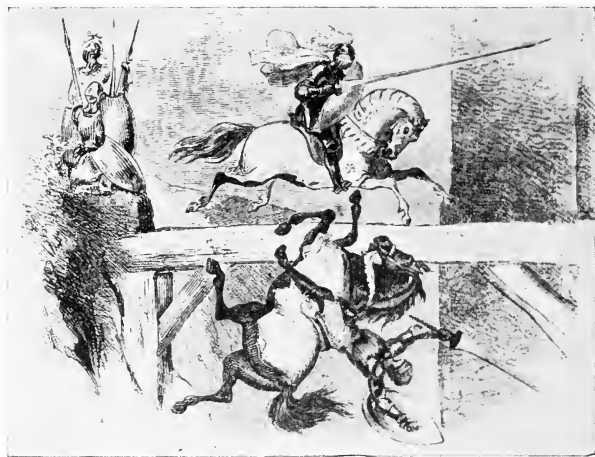
Repentance enters through confession's door.

Stings hath remorse, a balm repentance brings
That heals the wounded soul, and comfort gives.
Repentance Heaven wholly satisfies:
Why more should earth and wicked men then want?
We all do err, but all repent do not.
Let him that's free from sin the first stone cast.
When sin is judged let Sin not hold the scales,
But rather him who once Sin's lure has felt
And by repentance has forgiveness won.
Repentance true an angel is that guides
The soul to Heaven, and opes its golden door.
No man wins Heaven because he never sinned,
But Heaven's door doth ever ope to him
Who having sinned wears now upon his brow
The hazel wreath by penitence achieved.
God hateth sin, but sinners he doth love;
And when a sinner truly doth repent,
With loving hand God placeth on his head
The crown of righteousness which fadeth not.
Legion had faced about, all thralls cast off,
His liberty to do the right declared,
His errors and his crimes repented of,
And had irrevocably all resolved
Henceforth to strive his fellow man to bless.

Upon Fame's temple and Ambition's paths
His back Legion had turned, and wandered far,—
Whither he hardly knew and little cared
So that them far behind he surely left.

Upon the earth were now the steps of Night,
And from her shadowy robes fell chilling dews.
Through clambering vines a lighted cottage peeped.
With heavy heart the door he gently tapped
And begged to stay till morn. His name she asked.
"My name is Legion; I'm the type of hosts,"
He answered mournfully. "Why seem so sad?"
Inquired she. "Oh, for sweat and blood misspent,
Love thrown away, and hate my only gain."

A gracious welcome did her husband give,
And food and drink set forth: eat he could not
For wretchedness. A place to sleep he begged.
A little room, a chair and little bed,
Were given him; but far away kept sleep.
Unto his God on trembling knees he prayed,
As at his mother's side, in childhood's days,
He oft had prayed. "Oh, God, my wickedness
Forgive; my errors all I plainly see,
And evermore repent the wrongs I've done.



Legion overcomes Pride, and crosses the Chasm.

Unto mankind my life I consecrate,
And pray Thee, and the Christ, and all the Saints,
To keep me steadfast in all good resolves,
Thus pride he overcame, and crossed the chasm;
And to his spirit came this precious psalm,

Sung by his hostess, or some angel near,
He could not tell,—perchance, 'twas but a dream,—
But like a balm it was unto his soul:

The Psalm of Repentance.

"Did we not err we'd not be human;
To err is not complete disgrace
Be it by angel, man or woman,—
If they their downward steps retrace,

"Deeply repent for sins committed,
For all misdeeds atonement make,
Be by their consciences acquitted,
And all their wicked ways forsake.

"God quick forgives repentant sinners,
Tears for sins done shine in His sight,
Those mortals are the final winners
Who for their sins are most contrite;

"Repentance opes the door of Heaven,
And cleans the soul from all its wrongs;
The brightest angels those forgiven,
And from their lips the loudest songs."

CANTO 3.

Legion Becomes a Crusader.

Then came a voice or vision—one or both:
'Twas of his mother,—that dear blessed saint.
Unto his soul it spoke in solemn tones:
"Ambition, and pursuit of worldly fame,
Afar astray from truth have you seduced;
And many sins your soul do stain, that call
For expiation, or for punishment.
Look at Jerusalem, the home of Christ,
Again beneath the Turk's polluting sway.
Thither as warrior take your pilgrimage
And win at once forgiveness and Christ's Tomb."

E'en like a trumpet's call these words did ring,
And in a moment quite transfigured him.
A bright light shone around, or seemed to shine,
That both his room enlarged and glorified.
Up from his couch he leaped, his sword he seized,
And on its hilt as on a cross he swore

The crusade 'gainst the infidels to join,
And never stay his heart, head, hand or heel,
Until by Jesus' holy Tomb he stood,
'Mid happy Christian hosts victorious.

Joining the army of the Emperor,
Beneath the holy banner of the Cross,
In company with many Christians brave,
His faith he vowed, and pledged his sword and spear
Holy Jerusalem to help redeem
From foul and sacrilegious Mussulmans,
Who had Mahomet's throne reared 'bove the Christ s,
And Christians treated worse than heathen dogs.

Thrilled and inspired by what he'd read and heard
Of Godfrey, Raymond, Tancred, Behemond,
And Richard Lion-heart,—and all that host
Of shining warriors and mighty men,
The brightest flowers of Christian chivalry,
Who former crusades led, and fame achieved
Which angels love and men commemorate,—
Legion his every energy did strain;
On land and sea fighting most gallantly
Himself to prove worthy his holy task,—
Heat, hunger and fatigue despising quite
As things most small and insignificant,
Compared with that divine and glorious goal
To which his life and soul were consecrate.

After great deeds which sounded far and wide,
Till some men thought him Godfrey come to life,
Or else Archangel clothed in human form,
One day, all hallowed in his memory,
Afar, above the hills of Palestine,
Uploomed the lofty towers and minarets
Of long-desired Holy Jerusalem,
Seated high up as on a lofty throne,
The bright blue sky, like God's huge hollowed hand,
Making above a heavenly canopy.

Then up from fifty thousand happy throats
Went shouts of joy, and outcries of delight,
So rapturous their soul's felicity.
With branches of palm trees held high aloft,
The priests and knights marched solemnly ahead,
Crying "Hosanna, blessed is the King
That cometh in the name of Christ, the Lord!"
And when the City's gates were almost reached
Again they shouted in their joyousness:
"Lift up, oh gates! ye everlasting doors,
Lift up! the King of Glory cometh in!"

Then opened wide the city's mighty gates,
And all that Christian army entered in,
With banners high, singing triumphant songs,
And music making in a thousand ways.
The crescent of Mahomet was pulled down
And in its place the Cross of Christ upreared,
'Mid hallelujahs, and loud blasts of trumps.
A day it was when earth seemed near to Heaven;
And many looked to see the heavens ope,
And Jesus and his angels in the clouds,
Coming to reign on earth a thousand years.
Around Christ's Tomb those Christian warriors,
From Emperor down, most humbly kneeled and prayed,
Their sins confessed, and full forgiveness begged.
A priest on Legion's head his hands did place,
And for his valor in the cause of Christ,
Full absolution gave for all his sins,
And prayed God's blessing on his heart and soul.

So Legion felt his vow had been fulfilled,
And happy on his humble couch reposed,
At peace with God, in favor with the Church,
And grateful for the blessings he'd received.

With a deep sigh, such as one often heaves
When some great work of his has ended well,
He closed his eyes. Then wandered forth his thoughts
Unto that ocean isle and Maiden fair.

A sharp pang smote his soul: perchance thought he
A sin he'd done against her and her sire
To whom so much he owed, and nought had done.

He seemed a sea-dove's gentle coo to hear:
That locket's weight seemed heavier than a ton,
And Margie's hair within did seem to weep.

A single hair from head of lady love
Strong as a cable is to hold the heart,
Blow what winds may, or roll what billows high:
Can sever it nought but the dart of death.

CANTO 4.

A Vision of the White Sea-Dove.

Sleep came, and other lands and scenes appeared.
Within a forest wild and very thick,
Its trees with many vines draped heavily,
The home of fairies, sylphs and elfin sprites,
A lonely lake a lonely isle contained,
Sleeping beneath the stars and crescent moon.
Exceeding calm the night, exceeding clear the sky,
And smooth the water-lilied lake.
On trees and rocks around in darkest shades,
Perched big-eyed owls looking so wise and weird —
And enigmatical. A pearl canoe,
That seemed the image of the crescent moon
Thrice three times magnified, upon this lake
Did float as in the sky, so mirror-like
And smooth its face. Within this pearl canoe
There stood an elfin queen in robes of gauze
That scarce did all her graceful form conceal.
Around her neck were strings of tiny flowers
Of pearls and opals made, and many gems
Were glittering in her hair; upon her brow
There shone a star within a crystal crown.
A slender wand of pearl was in her hand,

With vervain wreathed, and *ignis fatuus* tip.
Around this crystal boat a white sea-dove
In circles flew, then on its prow did light,
With jeweled hand witch-hazel leaves she threw
Upon the white sea-dove, her wand waved high,
And spoke a magic word,—when lo, the dove
Changed to a maid, of form and features fair
Beyond comparison. The isle was reached,
On shore the elfin queen all gracefully
Did place her dainty feet, in crystal shod:
Her hand she gently held unto the maid,
Who stepped ashore. A lovely spectacle!
The elfin queen, the dove-born maid, the boat
Of shining pearl, the lake that in its face
All heaven showed, the vine-hung forest trees,
The owls so still and preternatural,
The overspreading sky, the crescent moon,
The hosts of glittering stars, the air of mystery:
A pageant beautiful as Paradise.

Again her wand the elfin queen waived high;
A magic word she spoke,—a lightning flash,—
And lo, the ocean isle as plain as day!
Then came a song, tender, plaintive and low,
Forth from whose lips he could not tell nor guess,
Perchance that Angel's;—who dare this deny?

The Angel's Sea-Dove Song.

“Upon an Eden isle
A white sea-dove;
Then Love came with a smile,
Like skies above.

“The sea-dove's heart he won,
Nor long did woo;
But now, alas! he's gone —
He was not true.

“She sits on yonder cliff,
Looking afar,
To where her lover's skiff
Set like a star.

"Woe to the white sea-dove!
Woe to her friends:
The flowers she once did love
No more she tends.

"Woe to the lover, woe,
On land or sea!
He laid the sea-dove low:
Revenge may be!
Woe to false lovers, woe!"

The song had ceased; and lo, upon the cliff
The Maid, looking in tears towards the sea.

As swells at times the ocean's level breast,
And up from deepest depths a bubble comes
With awful groan as though from grief or pain:
So Legion's bosom heaved with agony,
And from his heart came up a woeful groan —
He so did long the island Maid to see.



Legion's romantic Wish.

"Had I my will a chariot would I mount,
With steeds fleet-footed as the shafts of light,
And straight to Redenfayn across the skies

Like a resplendent meteor would I fly;
And with her by my side thence speed my way
To Paradise, and there live evermore,—
All happy in her beauty and her love.
With her compared all else is nothingness.
Oh, I do love her so!" he said, with sighs;
"But in my selfish schemes so much absorbed
Have her neglected, and her valiant Sire —
Perhaps they're dead — and I their murderer."

This thought so keenly stung him up he sprung,
And hurried forthwith to the Emperor.
Release he begged, now that the war was closed
Triumphantly, and peace had been declared:
The Holy City all in Christian hands.
"Most cheerfully," he said, "your wish I grant.
Unto your King and country greetings bear
From me and all my host. Most valiantly,
My son, you've fought to win for Church and me
The Holy City and the Tomb of Christ,
With highest honor in your every act.
Upon your head may Heaven's blessings rest.
Unto your King my chancellor will send
A missive of your valor, in my name."

A day had been, when up to highest stars,
These praises from a mighty Emperor
Would Legion's soul have borne in ecstasy.
That was the time when he so longed for fame.
But now ambition's roots had from his heart
Been torn, and love of earthly fame cast out.
The right to do in sight of God and man
Now his soul's most supreme solicitude,
And Margie's love the height of earthly bliss.

When once love's boat its golden anchor casts
Deep in the heart, forevermore it's moored.
No storms of hate, no billows of distress,
Can force it thence, or drag its anchor forth:
These only make more strong that anchor's hold.

Some cruel fate, perchance, the boat may wreck,
And out of sight the hull may wholly sink;
Yet to the heart some fragment of the wreck
That golden anchor will forever hold;
And in the soul's deep-sea-like silences
Its motions will mysterious music make
That wakes to life sweet memories of the past,
And fills the eyes with tears one scarce knows why.

With brightest hopes and many loving plans,
Legion departed for his father-land,
Bearing the Emperor's missive to his King,—
Fame having won when not in quest thereof.
Joy winged his feet, and love his happy soul,
As on he sped; and like a shaft of light
His thoughts shot westward unto Redenfayn.
On reaching Europe father John he sought
The answer of the island Maid to learn;
Resolved, her answer favoring, at once
The King to see, and pardon full to get
For Strombold brave, and have to him restored
His lands and serfs, honors and offices,—
With help of father John;—and then to seek
The ocean isle, this pardon in his hand,
And happy make sweet Margie and her Sire.

Then bloomed the Youth into the perfect man,
And the new Legion henceforth he became.
Out from the brain of Jove Minerva sprang
Full grown, and fully armed for deeds of war;
But here from Legion's heart there sprung full grown
A greater Legion armed for deeds of love.

Who eastward sails some day will come again.

Around its parent Sun still rolls afar
That little orb the Earth,—trusting in God.
Within the ocean's bosom still doth rest
That sweet isle, Redenfayn,—trusting in God.
On Redenfayn the Maiden still doth live,—

Trusting in God, though tears her only food.
And conquer God nor men nor demons can,
And He at last will every wrong make right,
And every crooked thing will straighten out.
So Redenfayn, have hope: a bright day comes:
That Angel is at work: *so read the Leaves.*
All evil charms the charm of love out-charnis.



The Lake of the Elfin Queen.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Triumph of Right.

PROEM.

The *Leaves* now portray life's battle-field, where Right and Wrong struggle with each other for the possession of the souls of men, Fides man's champion, and Malfides his chiefest enemy. The awful struggle is pictured out in detail. In this conflict Strombold at last triumphs over his enemies. Legion obtains his pardon from the King, with restitution of his estates. In the meantime the Maid is sustained by hope and premonitions that Legion will soon return, the Guardian Angel encouraging her hopes. The victory of light over darkness described, prefiguring the victory of joy over sorrow.

CANTO 1.

Life's Battle Field.

Each living thing has its peculiar food:
On meat and drink and air the body lives;
The brain on knowledge and realities;
On love and sympathy the heart subsists;
On hope and faith the soul; the mind on truth,
Which comprehends all that is good and right;
And fancy lives on what is beautiful.

Only a counterfeit is he, though fair
In face and form, who does not honor hold

The chiefest jewel of his thought and act.
The outward form is but the money's stamp,
The inward substance makes it good or bad.
Truth's coins are purest gold and fullest weight.
So, of man's worth his honor is the test.

Falsehood's a plant that in a moment sprouts,
Quickly matures, and blossoms in a day;
Then turns to worthless stalks of ugliness.
But truth's a tree slow in development
Yet lives for centuries; and when it blooms
Angels rejoice, and men live on its fruit.
Ships must have rudders, charts and compasses,
Wherewith to sail in safety o'er the seas,
And icebergs, shoals and hidden rocks avoid:
So man must ruddered be by honesty,
Charted by rules that make for equity,
And compassed by a conscience clear and strong,
Or shipwreck suffer on life's stormy sea.
Each man, regardless of his parentage,
At birth an angel and a devil holds
Who fiercely struggle for his ownership:
This angel's cause the powers of Heaven espouse;
This devil's cause the powers of Hell support.
Between these two is waged eternal war,—
Man's soul the priceless prize of victory.

Forever on life's mighty battle-field
Is waged the war the souls of men to win.
Within himself each man a legion is
Of aspirations and of appetites,
That make for good and right, or bad and wrong:
These powers of right or wrong, man's friends or foes,
Set in array like mighty warriors
For his salvation, or his overthrow.
Fides, the frank and faithful, bold and brave,
Knight of the Noon, who glories in the light,
And scorns a thought to think, a deed to do,
All may not fully know and understand,—

In shining armor clad, on war-horse white,
With breastplate, sword and shield defence to make,
But weapon none wherewith to make assault;
No visor o'er his face, no secret knife
Within his clothes concealed; his large blue eyes,
And forehead smooth, badges of honor bright
And firm fidelity;—alert and strong,
Forth fearless stands,—man's chiefest champion.
His words all fragrant with the truth; his face
Bright with the sunshine of sincerity,
Aglow within his eyes the vestal flames
Of purity, the home of love his heart.
His soul the seat of honor's shrine, his hands
All full of charity and kindly deeds.
His feet when pity calls easy to move,
But firm as rocks when duty bids him stay.

And close beside, her hand upon his arm,
His readiest coadjutant, stands Love,
God's fairest daughter, and most merciful:
Radiant her face, tireless her hands and feet;
How clothed none notices, for such her smile
So fascinating, such her voice so sweet,
So magical her eye, all who behold
Entranced become, and into raptures fly.
Ready and willing, even anxious she,
By word and deed and smile, to strengthen here,
To succor there, to comfort everywhere,—
Each heart to help, encourage and inspire
To struggle up and on, forever on,
To victory eternal and complete.
All infinite her gentle ways and means,
Her smiles and words, her balms and antidotes,
To heal, to soothe, to comfort and revive,
And put new hopes into the hearts of men.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

Near by, and softly moving to and fro,
Is Malfides, the Champion of Fraud,

A trickster's head he has, a traitor's heart,
A liar's tongue, the fingers of a rogue,
The smile obsequious of a hypocrite,
A backbone limber in servility,
And feet unstable, shod with cowardice.
Clad in a cloak he is, its pockets full
Of tinsel'd flatteries and spurious coin;
Upon his face a mask that wears a smile;
A slender dagger in his breast concealed;
Upon his tongue, that has the sound of truth,
Falsehood and treachery have their dwelling place:
Such is Malfides, man's chief enemy.
Vile knavery like India rubber is:
'Twill stretch, contract and twist, and is opaque;
But honesty transparent is, like glass,
And will not stretch, nor bend, contract nor twist.
Of rubber was Malfides' conscience made.
Beside him crouched, his chief confederate,
That old hag, Hate, with face wrinkled and black,
Tushes for teeth, eyes deep and demon-like
That look askant, hair coarse and standing up,
And up her sleeve a poisoned dagger hid.
The house of Fides many windows has
Uncurtained all, and many open doors;
But in a den his home Malfides makes,
Concealed from view by bushes, briars and weeds.

Fides 'gainst Malfides, the true 'gainst false,
Fair Love 'gainst dark-faced Hate: so hostile they
No universe so large can both contain —
In peace: so war eternal must be waged,
Till one shall be supreme, the other bound.

CANTO 2.

The Struggle between Right and Wrong.

Thus aided, thus opposed, life's tournament
Man enters on, his powers and weaknesses

All marshalled for his aid, or overthrow.
Fides and Love, and their coadjutants,
Befriending him, and helping him proceed,
Rekindling hope as long as gleams a spark
Amid the pallid ashes of despair.
Upon his feet again quick setting him
With new light in his eyes, and in his heart
Higher resolves, new strength within his veins,—
Equipped all 'round life's battle to resume.

Who seeks for happiness and fair renown,
Without Fides and Love his only guides,
In boat of stone doth a wide ocean sail,
His oars of iron and his sails of lead,
A frenzied cyclone for his only wind,
A mob of drunken mutineers his crew,
His only merchandise the wrath of God,
And Hell the only port upon his chart.

But Malfides and Hate, and their allies,
With threats for force, and lures for bribes, so play
Man's predilections, moods and appetites
Against himself that oft what seems success
A sham doth prove, or fraud, or mockery.
Pride and conceit, self-will and prejudice,
Oft load man down, and lead astray his feet.
Under Malfides' lead more time man spends,
More labor does, more grief and pain endures,
Without reward, than victory would have cost
Had he with Fides stayed, unfaltering,
And bravely battled on, the truth his sword,
His shield bright honesty, his spear the right,
His every act done in the light of day.

Into the field step many spirits bright,
In armor clad 'gainst every weapon proof.
"For nought but right!" their thrilling battle-cry,
Their one supreme desire mankind to bless,
Affected not by frauds nor flatteries,
Treading in high disdain on every snare,

And scandal-bomb by Hate set in their path.
Virtue and rays of light good Fides sheds,
Archangel-like, from every nerve and pore,
When he beholds such spirits cut their way,
Through every phalanx, fortress, fence and foe,
While like an angel Love doth proudly smile,
And her hands clap in ecstasy of joy.

A moment pales Malfides when he sees
Spirits so mighty step into the field;—
Then straightway all his counsellors convenes,
Ambitions, frauds, conceits and appetites,
Pride, pleasure, sophistry and compromise,
Captains of guile, chieftains of lust and force,
His helper Hate, and her accomplices,
And bids them all their agencies put forth
Fides to rout, and Love to circumvent.

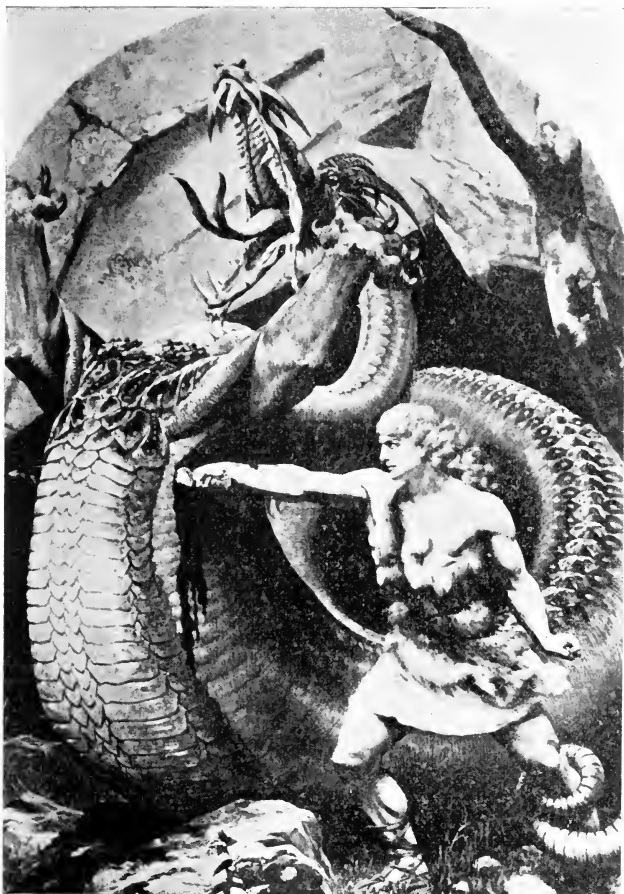
The armies of the aliens marshalled are
For Malfides; and every influence
That tends the right to weaken, or destroy,
Gather around to aid him in his fight,—
That bestial horde of low intelligence
Whose minds above their appetites ne'er rise.
Kinsmen and countrymen, comrades and friends,
Brothers, sisters, lovers, husbands and wives,
By cunning Malfides as tools are used,
And mighty agencies, to circumvent
Deceive and overthrow bright paragons,
Who otherwise invincible had proved.

Millions on millions are the combatants,
Millions on millions in defeat go down;—
With wounds and stains and scars millions escape,
By Fides rescued, or by Love redeemed.
Lured on by pleasures, or forced back by pains,
At morn, the bright-winged dove of hope doth cheer,
At noon, obstructions stop, or turn aside,
At night the dust of dire defeat his mouth
Doth fill, or ashes of despair his heart;

But Love and Fides to his help straight come,
His enemies beat back, his wounds bind up,
New hopes put in his heart, new strength inspire,
And bid him try again: and try he does,
And ever tries, using the sword of right,
The shield of truth, the helmet of good faith,
Until at last the victory he achieves;—
For final conqueror the right will be,
Or God's not God, and Hell's the doom of all.

So Armageddon's battle rages on,
Fides and Love contending for the right,
Battling 'gainst open wrong and secret fraud,
Striving man's welfare ever to promote,
And this earth make again a Paradise.
While Malfides and Hate, with malice filled,
Ever their uttermost put forth astray
The innocent to lead, the good to thwart,
The wrong to help, low selfishness to aid,
And this earth make the nursery of Hell.
But for a day has Wrong cause to rejoice,
While Right through all eternity is glad.
Though justice sometimes sleeps she never dies.
When she awakes let guilty men beware;
Their hour of doom the clock of right hath struck.
Thus when takes place the final reckoning
Accounts are squared, and equity is done.
At last Malfides always meets defeat,
And Hate on earth no true disciple makes.
Yes, God is God, and that doth mean it all.
Wrong for a time may prosper and succeed,
And Right go down in failure and defeat;
But Justice reckoning keeps, and some good day
Her sword in vengeance will she swing on high,
Old Wrong strike down, and give to Right his own.
For holy Right is Heaven's favorite,
And all the powers of good his faithful friends,
Working to give him final victory;
While Wrong its birth-place had in Satan's heart,

And none but sons of Belial wish it well:
God's high degree brands failure on its brow,
And utter ruin ends its vile career.



Right slays the dragon Wrong.

The Demon Woe, like a huge raven sits
By night and day upon the Tower of Wrong,
Croaking its doom and final overthrow;
And come some great day will unto the world
When by the sword of Right the dragon Wrong
Will through the heart be pierced, and fall in death,
Never again to harm the sons of men.

CANTO 3.

Strombold's Glorious Vindication.

There is a wind that comes from frozen fields,
There is a wind that from hot deserts blows,
There is a wind with plagues upon its wings,
There is a wind that tears up land and sea,
And fleets and forests rend and overthrow:
How terrible are they! But there's a wind,
More dreadful than they all, that whispering comes
From slander's venom'd tongue, and chills to death
The good, the true, the pure and beautiful.
But they who such winds sow shall whirlwinds reap.
Curses and slanders oft come home to roost,
And they who draw the sword shall by it die.
Justice though blind, and often slow of foot,
Yet ever follows on the trail of Wrong,
And soon or late will hunt the culprit down,
And wreak dire vengeance on his guilty head.
Oft long for vindication must one wait,
When grievous to one's soul the least delay;
Faith one must have, and patience cultivate:
Patience a plant of scentless leaf and bloom,
Devoid of beauty and most slow of growth,
But oft its fruit is sweet and good for health.

Oh, Strombold, brave and true, Fides your friend,
And Love your sweet ally, their forces all,
Both far and near, are rallying to your aid,
And glorious vindication soon will bring.

For just deliverance have you waited long,
But now the noon of Justice is at hand.
The machinations of your enemies
By Malfides conceived, and carried out
By aid of Hate, now come into the light,
And light to fraud and falsehood is sure death,
But unto truth and right is victory.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

Oh Redenfayn! to you a bright day comes,
That Angel is at work: *so read the Leaves.*
Happy was Legion father John to find,
And happier far to get the Maid's response.
The faithful messenger he warmly thanked,
And gave reward most rich in land and gold.
A day of joy unto his heart it was,
The like whereof at no time had he felt
Since from fair Redenfayn he'd sailed away.
Thrice and again her missive did he read;
Its every line he kissed, and every word,—
While over all his face were smiles and tears
Like rain in May when brightly shines the sun.

"Oh, Margie, dear, what griefs I've caused your heart —
And caused mine own! — all without recompense.
Forthwith unto the palace will I go,
With father John, and humbly pardon beg
For your brave Sire,—and then to you I'll speed.
Oh, happy day, when 'round your darling form
My arms I'll fold, and to your precious lips
Press mine, into your sweet eyes fondly look,
And call you mine, mine own,—forever mine!"

No more a youth with many whimsies wild;
His hard experience had his mind enlarged,
And to full manhood was he rounded out.
No more a Legion bent on deeds of war,
Fired by ambition and intent on fame;
But the new Legion pledged to deeds of love,

And eager only good to do to all.
Within the royal palace glad he stood,
Awaiting private audience with the King.
Into the Hall of State invited soon,
Kindly the King received him, took his hand,
His brave deeds praised, and eulogized his sire.
"For Legion's son what can I do?" he asked.
"Two favors of your Majesty, I beg,"
Promptly that son replied, all full of hope.
His shipwreck on the isle of Redenfayn
Briefly he told, where exiled Strombold lived,
His daughter and a serf sole company;
Told how when nearly dead his life she'd saved;
And how by chance with father John he'd met,
Who had with Strombold nursed his noble sire.

Then came in father John, and told the King
How Legion's sire Strombold had bravely saved,
And off the field triumphantly had borne,
Then nursed him till he died; how to the King
Devoted Strombold was; and how one day
Up came a courier on a breathless steed,
With news his wife to death was very nigh,
And from him prayed a kiss before she died;
How crazed with grief Strombold sprung on his horse,
And wildly spurred away to Gishborn Fief.
"Now, my requests are these, your Majesty,"
Said Legion: "that my stay at Redenfayn,
It being 'neath your frown, you will forgive.
And if your peace and welfare suffer not,
For brave Strombold I pardon humbly beg;
And for his loyalty I pledge my head."
"I long had thought him dead, without an heir,"
Exclaimed the King: "Strombold, that valiant man,
Or long ago would I have pardoned him,
And his estates and honors all restored.
That he was innocent, as father John
Has truly told, I long ago had learned.
Yes, yes, my son, your two requests I grant,—

Most gladly grant. Go, bring brave Strombold back,
Full re-instatement I accord to him,
And for the wrong done him his pardon beg.
The proper writings I'll have made at once;
And all of you hope soon to see at Court."

"Ten thousand grateful thanks, your Majesty!
My fortune, sword and life are ever yours,"
Legion exclaimed, with heart of happiness.
"And, please your Majesty, a missive here
For you I have from the great Emperor,
Signed at Jerusalem." "What!" cried the King,
With voice and look of great astonishment,
While father John fell humbly to his knees,
Crossed thrice his heart, and kissed his crucifix.
"Crusader thou, and all unknown to us."
Low Legion bowed with knightly dignity.
Breaking the missive's seals the King aloud
Its contents read: of Legion's worth it told,
His mighty valor and self-sacrifice;
How he the highest offices refused,
Declaring that his time, talents and blood,
Not unto him but unto Christ belonged;
And any pay for holy duty done
Would taint the deed e'en worse than simony.
While read the King Legion his head bowed low,
Deeply ashamed such eulogy to hear.
Then Legion's hand again the King did take,
Praising his valor and his piety,
And bidding him some private day to come
And tell in full his crusade's history.

Meanwhile good father John his rosary
Did read, and often kissed his crucifix,
Deeming one who had in a crusade fought,
And helped Christ's Holy Sepulcher to win,
Great as a saint and greater than a king.

CANTO 4.

Hope Sustains the Maid.

The island Redenfayn, in ocean's arms
Lay cradled well, by loving billows rocked,
The tender winds singing their lullabies.
With strings of shining shells inwove with moss
And pebbles bright, the isle was circled round.
Among its groves lingered the singing birds,
The flowers unto the sky their sweet eyes turned,
And poured their grateful incense on the breeze.
But ah, their island queen no smiles did give,
No cheering words of praise. Grief had her heart
And strength consumed. Pale sickness now
Her lover was, hugging her tender form,
And like a ghou! feeding upon her life.

Upon the cliff where he did use to sit,
There sat the Maid, looking through tears afar
Upon the sea, hoping for his return.
"How bright the sun! a day for Paradise,"
The Maiden said; then added, with a sigh:
But I've no heart its beauties to enjoy.—
How sweet this breeze to fondle with my hair!
How soft its step upon my fevered brow!
Perchance within this breeze some spirit dwells,—
Some spirit come to pity me, and soothe
My grieving soul. Oh, list! how sweet it sings,
Like shells of pearl sing of the silver seas.
How kind in God to make the breeze my friend!
If then so kind my prayer will He deny
And him keep from me whom I love so well?"

"Oh, hark! he comes, and —no! His footstep soft
I thought I heard treading within my ear.
A feeling have I somehow that he's nigh:
In dreams last night I met him on the beach.
Oh, love, thou once my joy and very life
Surely wilt not me leave of grief to die!

Dead can he be, sleeping beneath the sea?
No, he's alive, and surely will he come.
Did I one moment think that dead he was,
Beneath the sea I'd plunge to sleep with him.



The Guardian Angel comforting the Maid.

Oh, could my feet upon the waves but walk,
Or on the winds could my frail body fly,
Through all the world I'd wander far and wide
Until him I had found: then in my arms

All tight and strong I'd clasp his body round,
And to his lips all greedy press my own,
Till all my soul had gone into his heart,
And I were dead in ecstasy of bliss!"

These thoughts surcease of sorrow seemed to give,
And for a moment shone more calm her face,
The white sea-dove a-cooing all the while.

"But oh, so little has my memory
Wherewith to feed my hungry heart and soul!
Had he my hand but held awhile in love,
Or to my face one moment touched his cheek,
Or had he pressed but once his lips to mine,
Or his arms held me imparadised,
Then something would I have to live upon.
Strange that his love to me he never spoke!
But oh, his looks and tones his love did show.
And talking to himself I heard him once,
His love for me his theme: with emphasis
He said that me he loved and did adore.
Though thrilled with joy I turned, and crept away,
Lest he my form should see; and—heard no more,—
Both glad and guilty I had heard so much.

"Weak are my limbs, but strong my heart and hopes.
There's something in the air, or in my soul,
Which I know not, that tells me he is near.
With both eyes shut I see his boat afar,
My heart the haven where he longs to land.
This faith I have, and when it once is gone
Down will I lie, and die of broken heart.

"But in my soul God tells me come he will,
Who eastward sails some day will come again,
For from the east ever comes back the sun.
And in his shining train brings every good:
Who westward sail will nevermore return.
Eastward sailed he, and eastward look I will
Till he return;—long as I live I'll look.
Christians are buried, facing to the east,

Ready the Christ to greet when He returns.
So looking eastward in my grave I'll lie
My love to see when back to me he comes;
For come he will, be I alive or dead.
Oh, God, alive keep me to welcome him."
At work the angel was the Maiden's hopes
To keep alive, knowing while hope did last
Her life would last, and when hope died she'd die,
For life is hope: *so read the Myrtle Leaves.*

C A N T O 5.

Victory of Light over Darkness.

Among the South Pacific's isles and seas,
Half-way 'tween north and south and east and west,
The hosts of Night their somber tents had spread,
And sunk in sleep. But here Day's soldiers love
Early to come, and always linger late.
Soon in Night's rear their scouts began to fire.
Then Day-spring's squadrons charged impetuous,
With arrows armed, lances and shining spears,
Dispersing lagging shadows where'er found.
Westward towards the coast, in full retreat,
Soon all Night's armies, and camp followers,
Began to move, hoping in Asian lands,
In caves, or valleys deep, or forests thick,
Refuge to find from their fierce enemies.
But bright Aurora's fiery cavalry,
With flying shafts and shining swords assailed
On every side the foe's phalanxes huge;
While Dawn's vanguard, fleet-footed infantry,
With darts of fire, made havoc in Night's rear.
Nowhere a stand the hosts of Darkness made:
Some myrmidons, concealed in groves and caves,
Made show of fight, and sulkily held out;
But these the Sun's own valiant body-guard
With bolts of blazing fire soon put to flight.

Upon Day's banner perched the Morning star,
Cheering his legionaries when they charged,
While far and wide was heard the cock's shrill crow
Predicting victory for the King of Day.
Ever westward withdrew the hordes of Night,
Tumultuous and multitudinous,
Fleeing the weapons of their enemies.

Ever unto the front Day's legions pressed
Fighting with valor irresistible,
Planting their banners on the mountain tops,
Lighting the sky, making the moon turn pale,
Scaring away the stars, opening the eyes
Of men, and beasts, and birds, unfolding flowers,
And every living thing filling with joy.
Abandoning all Asia to the Sun,
The troops of Darkness crossed the Hellespont,
And that famed sea where Pharaoh's hosts were drowned;
But on relentless came the hosts of Light,
Shouting their battle-cries, and singing songs
Of victory and joy. On raven wings
Flew to and fro the Demon of Despair
O'er Night's rear guard, and panic struck it fled
Precipitous beyond the Middle sea,
And o'er the Urals, Alps and Appenines,
Leaving all Europe to the King of Day.

Bright was the earth and bright the sea and sky.
Oh, what a lovely thing the light of Day!
In all this world there's nothing half so fair,
And Heaven alone can with it be compared.
All Redenfayn with brightest light was filled,
So clear of stain, so pure of tint, so sweet
Unto the eye, surely in Paradise
It was distilled some special good to work.

But ere Night's glooms had wholly disappeared
That ray of light shot from Jerusalem
By Legion's loving soul the Maiden's heart
Had reached, and pictured there bright scenes of joy.

Upon her couch the Maiden lay, awake.
"Oh, what a dream!" said she unto herself.
"Plain him I saw ; plain him, and plain his boat,
Hither sailing over the smiling sea.
To me his hands he held, and seemed to say :



Light breaking through Darkness.

'I'm come with you to live forevermore.'
Upon ambition he his back had turned,
Content henceforth to live in love with me.
And when did end my dream, from out my heart
All sorrow passed away; and joy returned.

Like some sweet angel sent my soul to bless,
Into the sea all clouds of darkness sunk
And in a moment it was bright as day.
Bright, too, it is! A peace most sweet I feel:
Surely these omens some great joy forecast."
Then lay she down, and happy slept again.
That Angel was at work: *so read the Leaves.*
And overhead soft cooed the white sea-dove.

Who eastward sails some day will come again.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.



CHAPTER XVII.

Legion's Joyful Return.

PROEM.

Who saileth eastward some day will return. Legion returns: his happy meeting with the Maid. He brings the King's pardon and restitution of estates to Strombold, which makes him again Count of Bringosh Fief. He gives his history to Strombold who is rejoiced to learn that he is the son of his friend. Strombold in turn tells of Legion's valiant sire, how he repented of his ambition, and left with him a solemn charge for his son which was then and there delivered. The faces in Legion's locket are examined by Strombold who recognizes the countenance of his friend. Strombold denounces ambition, and vows to consecrate his life to the service of his fellow man, in the Land of Moderation. He gives his daughter to be Legion's wife, and they all are happy in their good fortune and in each other's love.

CANTO 1.

Legion Meets the Maid.

The day had just been born: the mother-dew
Upon its tender rosy form still shone.
Proudly the Sun, its sire, his head upreared
Upon his latest born to gaze and smile.

Its natal hymn the morning star did sing.
With beaks upraised in thankfulness, the birds
Drank down from flower-cups the diamond dew,
And with glad eyes poured through the argent air
Their fairy strains of light-heart minstrelsy.
Charmed by the birds and sun, with snail-like step
Up through the Maiden's soul came wakefulness,
And with soft hands upraised her heavy lids.
"Oh, what a lovely morn!" waking she mused.
"How sweet the air and merry are the birds.
Strong do I feel. New life seems in my veins.
And then that second dream—plain as the first.
Surely some blessed news is near at hand.
I saw him in his boat upon the sea,
Sailing with happy face straight to the shore.
I flew to meet him in my eagerness,
And in his arms he clasped me to his heart;
And there I lay in sweetest ecstasy,
A white sea-dove low cooing overhead."

Souls that do love with earnestness intense
Have power the bounds of empty space to leap,
And sweet communion with each other hold.
While she of him did dream his heart and soul
With all-absorbing fervor longed for her,
Praying that he at once her face might see,
And all the bliss of love full realize.
That Angel was at work: *so read the Leaves.*

While thus on Legion were the Maiden's thoughts,
His loving soul was going forth to her.
The more he thought the fairer she did seem,
And as her beauty grew his passion flamed.
His spirit gloated on her loveliness;
And quite enraptured with his reveries
Thus did his heart her grace and charms portray:

A Song of Love.

"Oh, fairer she than any skies,
Than flowers, stars or diadems;
All Heaven's centered in her eyes,
Like purest gold encircling gems.

"No frenzied young Varangian brave
Rejoicing in the battle's storm,
E'er saw, 'tween Heaven and his grave,
Valkyrie of so fair a form.

"No Viking sailing o'er the sea,
With golden spoil of France or Rome,
E'er saw in dream of ecstasy
A fairer maid to greet him home.

"No Troubadour of sunny France,
His fancy all aflame with love,
E'er saw in realms of bright romance
One fairer than this white sea-dove.

"No Persian bard by beauty fired,
In fancy viewing Paradise,
E'er Peri saw when most inspired,
With lovelier face, or sweeter eyes.

"No stalwart Turk, 'neath crescent sign,
Fighting 'gainst odds all hopelessly,
E'er Hourî saw more charming shine
As on he rushed to win or die.

"No Christian knight, to virtue vowed,
While battling for the Tomb of Christ,
E'er saw an Angel fairer browed,
When in his dreams imparadised.

"No Phidias nor Praxitiles,
While sculpturing for beauty's shrine,—
Nor painter of fair images,
E'er fancied lady more divine.

"Enough of radiance in her face
To make a hundred beauties rare;
Enough of purity and grace
To make a hundred saints most fair;

"Enough of gentle lowliness
To make a hundred nuns most prim;
Enough of love and holiness
To make a hundred Seraphim.

"Oh, she is fair beyond compare,
And good and loving as she's sweet;
My soul is tangled in her hair,
My heart doth worship at her feet.

"Oh, for swift wings to fly to her,
That I her darling lips may kiss,
At her shrine be idolater,
My spirit thrilled with perfect bliss!"

Who saileth east some day will westward sail.
A white sail gleams afar: Legion returns.
His happy heart loud beat the onward drum.
Her isle he sees: no ocean bloom so bright,
An Eden fair embosomed by the sea.
Upon his prow sits Hope; Joy at his helm.
On isle and sea the heavens sweetly smile.
No chart nor compass does he need: his heart
The boat doth steer; his soul doth push it on.
All merrily the gentle zephyrs sing,
Around the boat laughing the wavelets play.
The gulls swim leisurely away,—unscared.
And peace and joy seem all the world to rule.
But save the isle nothing doth Legion see:
To him that isle was all, and everything:
A blossom dropped from Heaven on the sea,
Holding an angel fair within its heart.

Swift o'er the waters glides the happy boat;
But slow it seems to him. With wish and will
Fain would he make it fly on eagle's wings.
The cliff, the shore, the grove, his eye surveys;
Each well-known haunt his vision penetrates.
He sees her not, and sighs. Pale grows his cheek,
And riotous his heart. The shore is reached;
Upon the sand he leaps, all eagerly,
Nor thought his anchor on the beach to cast.

So still the isle, and yet so ominous.
Her name he calls: "Mergie! oh, Mergie, dear!"
A lonely echo answered like a ghost;
And winds went sighing by. "Am I too late,

Too late?" he thought. Oh, awful agony.
Towards the Cave he bounded frantically,
At every step calling, "Oh, Margie, dear!"
Out from his heart had flown the dove of hope
And her black wings the vulture of despair
Was flapping near; but still he "Margie!" called.
'Who calls for Margie,' asked a friendly voice:
It was the Sire's: "'Twas I—is she alive?"
Half crazed and breathless, Legion quick inquired.
"She is,—but sick. Legion your name?" he asked.
"Yes, Sire, I'm Legion,—come the Maid to see—
And you,—you both." "Most glad am I you've come;
But out here stay till I her mind prepare.
Too frail is she for such a sudden shock."

The Sire retired. Upon her couch she lay.
"My child, a lovely day it is," he said,
"To take a walk; perhaps 'twould do you good."
"Perhaps it would," she answered, with a smile.
"Truly a perfect day it is,—just such
As in my dream last night I plainly saw."
"What did you dream?" he asked. "I dreamed of him—
But tired you are of him to hear me talk.
Some day like this,—some perfect day, he'll come."
"Yes, I'll go out and look upon the sea.
Stronger I feel and happier at heart."
Then said the Sire, perplexed the news to break,
"A feeling have I that he'll soon be here."
"Oh, father, you my very breath do take.
I'll with you go to look upon the sea.
If I were dead I'd rise to welcome him."
"A moment stay, my child, and let me look."
"Oh, father, tell me all! has Legion come?"
Her intuition read her father's mind.
"I think he has, my child," replied the Sire.
"Oh, father, what mean you? In plain words, speak;
And not in puzzling mysteries," she cried.
Plain are my words, my child, and true as plain:
Legion has come." "Then where, oh, where is he?"

Up from her couch, she sprung, with staring eyes,
And by his arm her father clutched with force.
"I can't believe until his face I see,
And feel him in my arms. Oh, where is he?"
"Sit down a while; I'll go and bring him in."
Out stepped the Sire, and soon with gentle tread,
Legion was there. A mutual cry of joy,
And both in love's embrace were closely clasped.

Of love's seclusiveness considerate
The Sire walked out, leaving the two alone;
For two love's sacred number is; and who
Makes three or more commits a sacrilege.

CANTO 2.

The Lovers' Reunion.

"Yes, now I'll live,—to be with you I'll live.
While you with me do stay I cannot die.
But had your darling letter never come
Oh, long ago I surely would have died.
On it I've lived; its words the flame of life
Have kept alive, and driven off despair."

All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

Back from his sunburned brow his hair she smoothed,
And with her fingers combed it half-way straight,
While down her cheeks flowed grateful happy tears.
When full upon her face he turned his eyes,
And with a tender kiss said "Dearest love!"
Oh, what a glow of rapture infinite
Her heart and soul, body and mind, did thrill.
As sudden flash lights up a darksome room,
Revealing all its beauties at a glance,
So those two words through her flashed ecstasy.

Weakest are words when feeling's most intense.

Felicity most exquisite it was,
The pressure of each other's cheek to feel,
The gentle clasping of each other's hands,



The Kiss of Love.

The joyous gaze into each other's eyes,
To hear and feel each other's hearts a-throb:
One moment of beatitude so rare
For all their griefs was perfect recompense.

Man loves, but woman worships and adores;
And he her altar was, his face her shrine,
Her tears the wine of willing sacrifice.
Oh, sweet the smile of perfect bliss that shone
O'er all her happy face, and in her eyes —
A perfect picture of felicity.

But once in life does joy's supremest thrill
With full force flash through two love-wedded hearts.
'Tis when first meet the lips of lovers true,
(Who ne'er before a kiss of love did give,)
Their vows to seal that they'll each other wed.
Then all the soul of each, quick through their lips,
Into the other goes, and one they are
Thenceforth;—their thoughts and feelings, hopes and joys,
Impulses and desires ever the same;—
And this the marriage Heaven doth approve.
Who never this thrill fully feel, in heart
And soul and mind, never are fully wed,
Whate'er the words and ceremonies used
To bind their bodies in the sight of men:
These one flesh make the twain, but not one soul.

C A N T O 3.

Restitution done to Strombold.

"Count Strombold, much have I to say, but when —"
"Call me not 'Count:.' Count once I was, and great;
But Count I am no more. Below a serf's
My honor is." Sadly the Sire did speak.
"But Count you are," quick Legion answered him.
"Full pardon have I brought you from the King,
With restitution full of your estates,
And all your titles, honors and commands —
But it is in the boat. Oh, me, I fear
I failed to anchor it, so eager I
You all to see. Excuse me while I go —"
"Be not disturbed," quickly exclaimed the Sire;

"Your boat I've anchored safe; your wallet's here."
"Oh, thanks! How thoughtful you and thoughtless I."
"Oh, say not so, Legion, my love!" she cried.
You did just right to show how in your thoughts
More precious we to you than anything."

With happy hands the wallet was unlaced.
The parchment reached. "Count, here's the document,"
Legion exulting said. The royal seal
Was broken by the Sire, and thus aloud
The welcome words he read: "*To Strombold, Count
Of Gishborn Fief: Full pardon you I grant,
And restitution make of your estates,
And all your titles, honors and commands,
In full. Done by the King, Henricus primus, Rex.*"
With shout of joy around her lover's neck
Her arms the Maiden threw in ecstasy;
And in the whirlwind of her great delight
Kissed him repeatedly, declaring oft
That he of all the creatures of the earth
Was dearest, best and most considerate.
Strombold, the Count, half-blinded by his tears,
And choking with emotion infinite,
Which he could not conceal nor yet declare,
Took Legion's hand, and for the service done
His thanks expressed with broken utterance.
"Count, I'm repaid; ten thousand times repaid,"
Legion replied;—"repaid by Margie's smiles,
And her dear gratitude. Besides, a debt—
A heavy debt of thankfulness and love,
To you I owe,—of which I'll later tell."

"Now take a rest, my child," the Sire her bade.
"Not strong enough are you longer to stand."
Kissing her lover then the Maid retired,—
No angel in all Paradise more glad.

To calm his feelings Legion walked alone
Towards his boat; and lifting up his eyes
Thus mused: "Oh, prouder I of Strombold's love,

And happier for Margie's gratitude,
Than were my name upon Fame's temple writ,
And I crowned king upon some field of blood;
And father Legion looking from the skies
Happier will be that I these deeds have done,
Paying in part the debt he Strombold owed;
And oh, rejoice my angel mother will
To see me turn from battling for false fame
The deeds of love and gratitude to do."
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

CANTO 4.

Legion gives his History to the Count.

The Sire, the Maid and Legion, happy all,
Sat in the sunshine looking on the sea.
"In brief my history I'll gladly give,"
Legion replied, when questioned by the Count.
"In Shonbirg was I born, and there's my home."
"In Shonbirg? Well know I that curious place—"
The Count put in,—and somewhat eagerly,
With staring eyes and mouth widely agape.
"Yes, in that place of myth and mystery."
"Your father's name?" The Count excited asked,
By some emotion almost overcome.
"Legion his name, the Knight of Shonbirg Hall."
Just as I thought!" exclaimed the Count, much moved,
Eying the speaker as though 'neath a spell,
And moving ever nearer to his side.
"You, Count, his friend; and when by foes beset,
And wounded unto death, you rescued him,
Nursed him until he died, then buried him."
"Most true, indeed," the old man said, while tears
Streamed o'er his face. "But how know you these things?"
"Battling for King and country near the field
Where my brave father fell I, too, some wounds
Received—" "Oh, Legion, were you wounded much?"

Too bad! oh, I'm so grieved!" exclaimed the Maid,
Smoothing his hair, and gazing in his face,
Most tenderly. "Not much, my darling love.—
To a rude hospital they carried me,
Where kindly nursed was I by father John,
The very priest—" "Yes, yes, the very priest,"
The Count did interpose; "the very priest
Who kindly helped me your brave father nurse."
"Yes, father John was both my nurse and friend.
My father's valiant deeds he told me all;
How he was kind as brave, and good as kind,
How on the bloody field of Balderbaum,
Beset he was by many hostile knights,
And wounded unto death by swords and spears,
Fighting great odds, valiant as Charlemagne;
How brave Strombold, the Count of Bringosh Fief,
A thunderbolt of valor and of war,
Mounted on fiery steed burst through the host
Of hostile foes, charging in fury to and fro,
Like Roland with his trusty Durandal
At Rouncesvalles, saved my noble sire,
And off the field bore him, Valkyrie-like,
On his own horse; and nursed him till he died;
Then to my mother a kind letter sent,
Rehearsing all my father's valiant deeds,
And all the mighty honors he had won;
How ere he died her darling name he blessed,
And prayed they'd meet in bliss above the skies.
Among my sacred things at Shonbirg Hall
That letter is, perfumed with mother's tears."
"Father's so good and kind!" exclaimed the Maid.
"I've read the truly brave are ever good,
Gentle and kind, to friends forever true,
To ladies like archangels guarding them,—
And such my noble father truly is."
"No paladin, no knight of chivalry,"
Legion replied; "no prince unparagoned.
Whether in fiction or in fact he lived,

Was ever braver, nobler, or more true
To every call of country, king or friend,
Than Strombold your great Sire, and Legion mine."
With a quick kiss the Maid these words approved.
"Full history good father John did give,
How spite and slander, with some envy mixed,
Had wrought your ruin with our noble King,
Though you of wrong were wholly innocent.
When healed my wounds, and peace had been declared
Between our King and all his enemies,
With father John, our friend, to Court I went
Your pardon to secure. Good father John
Your history gave in full unto the King,
Who was sore grieved that he so great a wrong
Had done so good and brave a man, and friend,
And gave the pardon I have brought to you."
"Oh, he was kind, and so was father John,"
She said; then added with a playful smile.
"But you, my dear, kindest and best of all."
"Little thought I when here," said he, "so near
Was I the man I most did venerate."
"'Twas all my fault," exclaimed the Maid. "All this
Except your name to me he fully told,
And had I then, good father, told you all
You would have known he was your Legion's son.
But oh, such strange events my mind perplexed
As in a dream I lived, and nought seemed real.
Oh, me! but what I've suffered for my fault!"
Grieve not, my darling love," Legion exclaimed:
"So happy are we now we can afford
At all the past to smile, and thank our God
That He so well did order all our steps."

No word said Legion 'bout his own great deeds,
Or what he'd done in battle for the King;
Or how upon the crusade he had gone,
And helped to drive the infidel away,
And save the Holy Sepulcher of Christ;
Or how both by the King and Emperor

He had been lauded for his mighty deeds,
And many Christian magnanimities.
Not of himself he cared a word to say,
But took delight in glorifying friends,
And either praised or named not enemies.

CANTO 5.

Strombold Tells of Legion's Sire.

"And you brave Legion's son!" the Count did say.
"Legion, dear friend of days that were my best!
Alas, what visions, and what memories,
Like panoramas, loom up in my mind.
Oh, what a battle on that fatal day!
All side by side we struggled with the foe,
And in our wake lay many a bleeding corpse.
Too many and too strong our enemies.
Half-way around he turned to look for me.
Pale was his face. His mind I understood.
My steed I spurred. On his hind legs he reared,
Pawing and snorting like a demon mad.
On every side my sword destruction dealt.
Legion I reached just as his strength gave way.
Quick lifting him across my saddle-bow,
My horse I wheeled, and bore him to the rear.
Our foes no stomach had for the pursuit.
The rest good father John has told you all.
From loss of blood he died. We buried him.
And all his hopes, ambitions and great deeds
Were to his sepulchre and friends consigned.
But he to Heaven went: his mighty soul
Too great and lofty was in earth to sleep.

"A priest did visit him; told him of Christ,
A God, who in dishonor died on earth
That men might live in glory up in Heaven.
Legion believed: such was his wife's belief.
The priest for him did preach and pray by day;

His wife in dreams did solace him by night.
And when at last came death his soul to take,
Oh, what a smile of bliss was on his face!
What love for God and man was in his heart!
What words of hope and Heaven were on his tongue!
'Wicked my life in sight of God,' said he.
'For fame I lived; no other God I knew.
My heart and soul ambition did bewitch.
My only world the earth; this life my all.
My wishes, hopes, desires and appetites
My only laws; pleasure my only aim.
The smiles of kings and queens, the people's praise,
Honors, titles, thanks and high offices,
Stars, medals, ribbons, trophies, dignities,—
The only things I longed for when awake,
The only things I dreamed of when asleep.
I was as 'twere in a delirium,
A giddy bantling of frivolity,
With worthless tinsel pleased, and baubles vile,
Playing a puppet's part in masquerade;
The poor despised, the sorrowful ignored.
No blessings in my hands for anyone,
For man and beast and bird no sympathy,
Myself the one, the all, beginning, end,
The center and circumference—the whole:
Against me weighed all else was nothingness.

But open now my eyes, restored my mind.
The follies I did love I now do hate;
What once I thought was gold I know is dross,
What once seemed great now's insignificant;
And fame's own crown I once so hankered for
I now abhor as blackest infamy.
A fraud ambition is,—a gilded fraud,
That lures men on the deeds of Hell to do;
To kill, to burn, to ravage and destroy,
With human blood and tears to fill the earth,
Till angels weep, and none but fiends rejoice.'
Such were great Legion's words before he died.

His boy he begged me find, and on his head
To lay my hand, (as now I do,) and say:
‘Thy father chargeth thee remember him;
And if ambition in thy heart thou hast,
Cast it all out, as God cast Satan out
Of Heaven. Ambition him a devil made,
Archangel though he was: how easy then
Of fallen men can it vile devils make.
Be kind to every thing; live to do good;
Love only love, and nothing hate but hate.’”
On Legion’s head the Count his hand did place
When he his father’s great commandment gave.
“Oh, Legion, thou again to life hast come,
And liv’st anew in person of thy son,
Who bears thy name and form, and has thy face.”

CANTO 6.

The Locket of Gold.

Of Legion’s mother then inquired the Count.
“Alas, my mother’s dead. My father’s death
Broke her dear loving heart. Upon her bed
She fell when she your mournful letter read;
And never rose again.” Tears filled his eyes.
“Yes, father,” said the Maid, “Legion all this
And more did tell before away he went:
Besides, his parents’ portraits he did show
Inside a golden locket, painted bright.”
“Let me that locket see,” the Count did ask.
From ’round his neck Legion the locket loosed,
And passed it to the Sire. “Yes, ’tis his face,—
’Tis plainly Legion’s noble countenance—
And yours: his perfect duplicate you are.”
“Yes,” said the Maid, gazing intently on
The face of Legion in the locket framed;
“But older is he, nor so fair of face.
See! what is this? a woman’s hair, I vow!”

A look most strange, akin to jealousy,
Came on her lovely face. Then Legion blushed,
And to his eyes came tears. "Sweet love, 'tis yours,"
All tenderly he spoke. "From off your head
Upon my face it blew one happy day,
When on the cliff we near together sat.
With care I took it off, and ever since
Thus have I treasured it—for your dear sake."
On Legion's face then glowed her happy eyes,
With smile like one in adoration wrapt.

For bulk or value as a thing of trade
Love careth not: a flower, or e'en a leaf,
A scrap of paper with her name thereon,
Or some few words that she sometime hath writ,—
Such are love's treasures; and, in lovers' eyes
More valued are than houses, lands or gold.
In Cupid's bank no money is received:
Its sole deposits flowers, letters, locks
Of hair, and scraps of writing or of print,
Rings, ribbons, photographs and handkerchiefs,
Trifles, gimcracks, gewgaws and trumperies.
Mementoes worthless to all other men
Most precious are to him who truly loves.
His loving soul doth through his tender eyes
Gloat long thereon with blissful memories;
While close at hand doth seem his lady love,
And radiant in his soul her image glows.
Kings have great wealth in their strong treasuries,
Gold, silver, jewelry and precious plate;
And earth hath diamonds, gems and mines of gold;
But nowhere is such priceless treasure found
As that small keepsake from the lady fair
Who has his heart in hers securely locked.
His love transfigures it, until it hath
A soul and language of its own, divine;
To give it price were vilest sacrilege,
To treat it lightly profanation base.

When once love's ichor gets within his veins
It so doth magnetize a lover's soul
That all his thoughts do gravitate to her;
And but a single hair from her dear head
Hath such electric force upon his heart
That all his being is suffused with joy
At sight or touch, or even thought of it.
Heavy the loads from Legion's grieving heart
That single hair of her's did often lift,
Changing the pangs of grief to thrills of bliss.

CANTO 7.

Strombold's Denunciation of Ambition.

"Oh, how ambition's been a curse to all!"
Exclaimed the Count, arising to his feet.
"Your Sire it killed, me has it wrecked—and you!
May Heaven save you from a fate so dire!"
That curse of Willowdale was in his thought
But prudence bade him leave the thought unsaid.

How grand a picture did the Count present!
Taller than Legion, straight as Norway pine;
Over his shoulders spread long locks of gray,
And to his waist in front a snowy beard
Flowed fully down, grand as a patriarch's;
His head of perfect mould, fit for a crown,
His face as wise and good as Daniel's;
In form and features all unparagoned.
Like Hebrew prophet thus he stood,—and spoke:
"Ambition's shining cup I drank all dry.
How bright the liquor looked, how sweet the taste,
When first I drank! But soon were gone the sweets,
And nought but bitter dregs and bane were left;
And these my heart dried up, and made me old
While yet in youth. For glory's crown I yearned;
In battles fought for country, King and fame,
Straining each nerve, enduring all fatigue,

Despising danger, famine and disease,
And mocking death as though it were a myth.

But near the King were men with jealousies.
No rightful recognition could I get;
Inferiors who had at Court a friend,—
E'en coward curs, promoted o'er my head.
My motives all impugned, my loyalty
Denied, my solemn oath discredited,
My greatest deeds held cheap, or disbelieved;
My sickness, wounds and sufferings held as nought;
My honor made a butt for scorn and sneers.
And when a dying wife to see and nurse
The camp I quit, the King was made believe
I had deserted him: so on my brow
The brand of Cain he placed, all my estates
And honors he in wrath did confiscate,
And me he banished to this lonely isle,
Where none before their home had ever made
But pirates, smugglers and vile picaroons,
This child of mine, and Jux, a faithful serf,
My only company. But with my books
And thoughts, and this dear girl, and good old Jux,
I've happier been than 'mid the sickening snarls
And petty jealousies of public life.

Here could I die content but for the thought
That my dear child a woman has become,
And wrong it is to keep her here confined,
Away from company congenial,
And all the many pleasures and bright scenes,
That thrill with ecstasy a woman's heart.
To her this isle grows duller every day;
Oft in her face the signs of grief I see,
And know away her thoughts are roaming far."
"Oh, father, happy I where'er you are;
And pine to death I would from you away,"
Exclaimed the Maid, taking her father's hand,
Caressingly. "Yet on the rack," said he,

"My limbs I'd rather stretch till torn apart,
Or on the block of death lay down my head,
Than pardon beg for wrongs I've never done:
Such the Varangian blood that fills my veins.
In sight of God my soul is innocent.
Indeed, the King should pardon beg of me,
Not I of him. In my integrity
I've pride: above all price I value it,
Above the crowns of kings, or royal state.
It's wholly mine; it none can confiscate.

"But restitution has at last been done,
And I feel grateful to the King,—and you.
The King his wrong confesses: that is brave
And good in him. The restitution I
Accept. 'Pardon:' that word I do not like,
But like the spirit that's behind: so both
Do I accept, and life begin anew—
On lines of peace and love, not war and hate.
And thrice rejoiced am I that Legion's son
Hath been to me in need the friend required:
Thus love doth love beget and multiply.

"Oh, what a curse to men this lust for fame!
An evil dream to me ambition was.
What sacrifices made I for its sake!
Leaving my wife to weep and pine and die,
While I for glory strove; spending my gold
And sweat and blood and health as worthless trash.
And what was my reward? A blasted hope,
A ruined life, a broken heart;—a love,
Bright as an angel's face and sweet as bliss,
For ever lost in an untimely grave,—
Murdered in very truth by my neglect.

"But henceforth all my life I'll consecrate
To deeds of kindness to my fellow men,
Atoning for all wrongs I've ever done,
And far more glorious make by deeds of love

My latter days than were my younger days
By deeds of war and struggles for renown.

"The Land of Moderation is the home
Of human happiness: that broad plateau
Where nothing's very great nor very small,
Nothing too worthless nor too excellent
For human use; nothing that ugly is,
Nothing divinely fair; no rich nor poor;
No skies forever bright, nor ceaseless rains;
No ecstasies that unto Heaven lift,
No wretchedness that drags down to despair;
No abstinence and no licentiousness;
No ceaseless joys, nor everlasting griefs;
No crowns of glory and no cells of shame;
No struggles fellow men to overcome;
No sinners great, nor saints too good for earth;
No Paradise no Pandemonium.
Upon its east ascending to the skies
The shining Mountains of Felicity;
Upon its west, low down, the Land of Gloom.
Living on Moderation's broad plateau
Midway between the lofty and the low
Contented I my eve of life to spend."

CANTO 8.

Legion and the Maid Betrothed.

To Legion turning Strombold warmly said:
"But once again, young man, my thanks you have;
And some day soon I will repay you well."
"Oh, father, he's so good," exclaimed the Maid;
"All that we have to him we'll gladly give;—
He is so good." Upon his face she gazed
Adoringly, like saint in worship lost.
"No pay I'll take," quickly Legion replied;
"But if your daughter you will give to me,
That will be payment many million fold,—

The only payment I'll accept. My love
For her and you, alone the act did prompt;
And only her dear smile and your good will
My happy heart doth crave for recompense:
To take aught else were worse than simony."
With that all tenderly her hand he took,
While she, with glistening eye and blushing face,
Watched wistfully her father's countenance.

"Reposing faith in all you've said to us,
Believing you brave Legion's lawful son,
If her consent my daughter freely gives
Your wedded wife I'm willing she may be."
Oh, had her face been painted then and there,
The eyes, the mouth, the cheeks, the changing tints,
The look of love, of joy, of gratitude.
Commingled with her rapture infinite,
Surely the world had sworn it was a saint's,
And offered adoration at her shrine:
Such was her look when thus her father spoke.

"But," said the Sire, "with me must be her home,
Or her home must be mine; for die I would
If we should separate." Then sprung the Maid
Into her father's arms, and her face hid
Within his sea of hoary hair and beard,
And wept for love and joy and gratitude.
Then raising up her head her sire she kissed
All rapturously. Soon into a laugh
She broke, and rising unto Legion gave
Her hand, her face ablaze with ecstasy.

That eve along the ocean strand they strolled,
But few words saying, happy with love's glow.
Devotedly taking her hands in his,
And in her face gazing with perfect love,
"Margie," he said, "with all my heart and soul
Your darling self I worship and adore;
My thoughts and feelings in you so absorbed
From you apart I vow I cannot live.

For your dear sake from fame away I turned,
And back have come to beg you be my bride.
My life and love to you I consecrate,
And thus atone for all the pain I've caused."

Than a returning lover, once deemed lost
But fondly loved, nought is more rapturous
To maiden's heart — when he returns to wed.
Most joyous gleams came streaming from her eyes,
And raptures shone in blushes on her cheeks.
Around his neck her slender arms she placed,
To hers drew close his cheeks. "All yours I am,"
Softly she said with sobs of ecstasy.
"Into your eyes now let me look," said he:
"So happy and so full of joy I feel."
Her head she raised, he kissed her kissing lips.
Oh, what a thrill of rapture supreme
Swept o'er each nerve and vein of heart and soul
When touched their loving lips, and gaze met gaze!
Right then in deed and truth their souls were wed:
They twain in heart and mind had one become
In sight of God, the angels and all saints.

As when two rosy clouds, far in the east
Amid the glories of the rising sun,
Touching exchange their electricities,
And flash resplendent in their ecstasy;
So, when two lovers join their lips in love,
In the bright morning of a happy life,
Their very souls in part are interchanged
To equalize their spirits' potencies,
Their hearts all thrilled with raptures exquisite,
Their eyes and faces all aflame with bliss:
So 'twas with Legion and fair Margaret.
All passions and emotions of pure bliss,
All thoughts and dreams of perfect ecstasy
Are focalized when lovers' lips first kiss;
The acme of supreme felicity,
The *ne plus ultra* of love's imaginings,

The lightning stroke of thrilling rapture,—
All Paradise into one touch distilled.
In memory evermore doth bloom that kiss,
And like a beacon-light upon the shore
A ray of joy casts o'er life's troubled sea
No night can darken, and no storm destroy.

"The maid you are," said he, I saw in dreams,
And loved so dearly, and so hopelessly.
Surely her power hath some angel used,
To make my dreams though fruitless once they seemed,
At last in perfect joy be realized.
Not for the glories of the Paladins,
Not for the fame even of Charlemagne,
Not for all trophies won on battle-fields,
Not for all crowns that fill ambition's dreams,
Not for all honors fame could ever give,—
No, not for all combined would I exchange
Your darling self and your enrapturing love,—
Adorned besides with beauty exquisite,
And every grace of heart and soul and mind."

A sea-dove white as snow cooed overhead.



CHAPTER XVIII.**The Maid in Bliss.****PROEM.**

The Vale of Joy described: all who live there live in happiness; and there reposes the spirit of the Maid as on a bed of fragrant down, resting from its labors and its sorrows. Redenfayn now a little Eden where the lovers enjoy their fill of felicity. The Maid has a dream of Paradise, which she relates, after which there is revealed to them that they were created for each other, and had been brought together by divine power.

CANTO 1.**The Vale of Joy.**

The Vale of Joy: oh, what a Paradise!
And what a bliss so sweet a home to have!
No clouds the sky obscure or shadows cast,
Except for needed rains, and then appear
Most beauteous bows spanning the vale on high;
No hurtful storms of wind, or hail, or snow,
No lightnings flash, no thunders terrify.
The trees of life here grow luxuriant,
In every month blooming and bearing fruits
That please the taste and perfect health bestow.

This Vale delectable has everything
Man's heart to fill with pleasure and delight;



Scene in the Vale of Joy.

Music and games, pageants and comedies,
Picnics, banquets, dances and jubilees,
With humor kind, and harmless jollities;

Most joyous companies for every mood,
And nowhere aught but loving courtesies.
All wills are good, and each will has its way;
All wishes wise, and each wish finds its goal.
Every ideal high, and realized.

Down through this Vale of Joy, of many rills
Composed, the stream of life all gently flows:
Its banks by flowers and graceful trees adorned,
While beauteous fowls upon its bosom float,
Or feed in happy moods along its shores.
From rocks and trees hang vines with luscious grapes,
Flowers fair and fragrant bloom on every side,
Grasses the greenest carpet every hill,
And every fruit that man delights to eat
Grows in perfection and profusion there.

Within this Vale of Joy all creatures fair:
Birds beautiful in feather and in form,
And merry in their songs; larks, mocking-birds,
Tits, wrens, thrushes, robins, nightingales,
Finches, pheasants, doves and bob-o-links,
Peacocks, swallows, wax-wings, orioles,
Pigeons, canaries, quails and humming-birds.
Here every animal that pleasure makes:
Chipmonks, rabbits, squirrels, guinea-pigs,
Zebras, gazelles, white deer and ponies tame,
Giraffes, merinos, quaggas, silk-fleeced sheep,—
All harmless pets of pretty forms or furs.

Here homes the loveliest and the happiest,
Mothers the dearest, children fair and good,
Edens of love, abodes of perfect bliss.
Friends here are true, love endless and sincere,
Each heart a fountain of felicity.
Hope here her house has built and made her home,
And under fate's decree there ever lives.
No maid without a lover true at hand,
No wife with husband cold, or gone astray,
But married life one endless honeymoon;

No youth without a sweetheart, fair and kind.
All houses are of happiness the home,
Be they grand palaces or huts of mud.

This Vale of Joy has neither but nor if;
All pleasures there without alloy, all bliss
Without satiety; no bitters haunt
The sweets, no thorns the rose, no nightmares sleep.
Enough for all but nothing in excess,
No idleness but no one overworked.
No love unsatisfied, no egg unhatched,
No seed of good but sprouts and bears a crop.

Nought 'gainst one's will does any wish to do
Within this Vale of Joy; but every act
Two pleasures makes: one for the doer, one
For him to whom in love the deed is done;
No law but love, no court but in the heart.
No Sirens here to sing temptation's songs,
For who could tempt when all are satisfied?
Here all are happy, here contentment dwells;
On beds of fragrant down, 'mid balmy air;
Here pillowed soft and sweet is every head;
And joys join joys like gold beads on a string.

Within this Vale of Joy are equal rights,
But no licentiousness; for righteousness
Is here with all the forms of holy laws.
From the high Mountains of Felicity,
Which border on the east this Vale of Joy,
Is seen afar a spirit grand and bright,
Resplendent as archangel glorious,—
Flying from land to land, from state to state,
Throughout the earth; with far-spread rainbow wings
Stirring the air, and shaking crowns and thrones;
His words the hearts of men thrilling with joy,
Sounding like bugle notes the grand advance.

This spirit all men love, and for his sake
Millions have died a willing sacrifice.

At his command thousands of patriot swords
Glitter defiance to his enemies,
And their strong battle never cease to wage
Until is heard the shout of victory.
To all mankind this message does he shout:
"Liberty I am, sent by Heaven's God
To battle 'gainst all forms of slavery,
And all oppression to annihilate;
Nor from my warfare will I cease, until
From every limb all shackles have I struck,
From every hand all whips, from every head
All crowns. No poor man shall a trammel have,
No prince a scepter, and no lord a sword.
The palaces of pride I'll everthrow,
And of their ruins build the homeless homes.
The sweat upon the brow of honest toil
More bright I'll make than diamonds in a crown.
None poor none rich, none humble and none proud;
But equals all in this earth's ownership.
Then Angels' trumps my jubilee will sound,
And freedom's joys the earth will edenize.
Then on triumphant wings, plumed for the skies,
To Heaven my way all happy will I wing
And at God's feet lay down my sword victorious."

CANTO 2.

No Evils in the Vale of Joy.

Within this Vale of Joy no evil thing,
No bitter seas of woe, no sinks of slime,
No deep abysses leading down to Hell,
Where demons throng and ghosts appear at night;
No deserts of despondency, no dens
Of wan despair; but gardens of delight,
Fair bowers of bliss, and groves of fruitful trees.

Here perfect peace and rest for every one,
None to molest and none to make afraid,

No honest effort here without success,
No hearts ingrate, no benefits forgot.
No envy, jealousy, spite nor revenge,
No rumors, scandals, backbites nor lampoons.
No effort here to injure any one,
But all so strive each other's lives to bless
That this doth seem their chief felicity:
For they who love, love to see others love.

Here are no serfs nor slaves, tyrants nor kings,
No poor man overworked nor underfed,
No thrones nor jails, no handcuffs, fetters, bonds,
Freedom to do the right for every man,
And none desiring any wrong to do.
Justice to all, the rich and poor alike,
And credit full for every honest deed,
No glories bright, no infamies nor shames;
No rioters, insurgents nor revolts,
No debtors, paupers, tramps nor mendicants.

No swords are here nor guns nor aught that kills,
Or wounds or pains, or loss or sorrow brings;
No larum bells at night, nor drums by day,
No whoops of war, black flags, nor bugle peals,
No sleep is broken, no repose is marred.
No pests one's ease to spoil; no biting flies
Swarm in the air, no vermin on the ground
Nor in one's house, no evils anywhere;
No weeds nor noxious vines nor poisonous plants,
No days unlucky and no evil stars;
To none aught haps unwished or out of time.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

No birds of prey or jarring note are here;
No vultures, crows nor ravens soil the air,
Or shadows cast upon the shining earth;
No hooting owls the forests fill with fears;
No lions roar for prey, no tigers growl,
No wolf nor bear nor other savage beast
Roam in the woods or make afraid.

No dangers lurk here near one's daily path,
No deadly snakes hide in the lofty grass,
No spiders, centipedes nor scorpions,
No pitfalls, traps nor snares nor stumbling-blocks,
No witches, goblins, ghosts nor bugaboos,
No deaths, no coffins, graves nor funerals.
No cobwebs here, dirt, mud nor carrion;
Nought to offend the eye, ear, smell or taste,
Nought to befoul, or taint, or make unclean;
No flaws nor cracks, specks, blots nor blemishes;
No moths nor worms, no bugs nor mice nor rats;
No cancers, sores, ulcers nor leprosy,
No sickness nor disease, no pestilence,
No scourge nor deadly blights, no famine, droughts,
Volcanoes, earthquakes, floods nor meteors,
No evil haps, but balms for every wound.

No prodigies, monsters nor miracles,
No lies, excuses nor apologies,
No zealots, bigots nor stern dogmatists.
No traitors, thieves, sharpers nor renegades,
No meddlers, marplots, wits nor termagants,
No tattlers, braggarts, scolds nor sycophants,
No pedants, fops, bullies nor laughing-stocks.
No babblers, buffoons, wags nor pessimists,
No misanthropes, witches nor Ishmaelites,
No discords, wrangles nor unkind critiques,
No purse-proud Pharisees nor penitents.
No tears nor sighs, dumps nor despondencies,
No giggles, smirks, guffaws, pouts nor complaints.

Anguish, regret, disgust and discontent,
All disappear soon as this Vale is reached.
No woe of any kind its joyous air
Can breathe and live. No thorns in any side;
And in no conscience reptiles of remorse,
To bite and sting, and make one's life a load.

No revelries, fun not frivolity,
No wit that stings, no humor that offends,

No sneers nor taunts, satires nor travesties,
No sport that pains or man or beast or bird,
No fashion, pomp, pride nor humility;
No boorishness and no vulgarities;
No Cæsar, Cassius nor Catiline.

Far up this Vale of Joy, where wide it spreads
Into an upland fair and Eden-like,
A constant blaze of brilliant radiance



The Vale of Joy.

Its iris rays shoots upward far and wide,
And now and then between the beams appear
Glimpses of gates of pearl, and shining walls,
And streets of gold, like the Jerusalem
John saw, all mirage-like, on Patmos isle.

Upon this upland rise the Cliffs of Time—
So high the next world they in part shut out.
Into the ground, this side these towering cliffs,
Life's river runs; but on the other side

In Paradise soon reappears, in full,
And there flows on in joy and beauty evermore.

Such is this Vale of Joy, this Paradise,
Where life is long and all felicity,
Bowers of beatitude on every side,
And skies above bright as the smile of God.
Near to this Vale now floated Redenfayn.

CANTO 3.

The Maid's Beatitude.

Who whilom dwelt beside the Land of Gloom
Her home now had within this Vale of Joy.
In perfect bliss the Maiden's soul was lapped.
On every side were bright beatitudes;
Her food most luscious fruits, nectar her drink,
Music delicious and enrapturing,
And him she loved her constant company.
'Neath Legion's smile the lilies on her face
Quickly gave place to pinks and roses red;
Unto her limbs agility returned,
And 'mong the rocks again her laugh did ring.

To Eden now in all its loveliness
Transfigured was the island Redenfayn.
Blest all supremely did the Maiden feel.
Her charms enraptured him: his soul he poured,
Through eyes bewitched, upon her happy face.
No other maid seemed ever half so fair,
No other man ever so fortunate,
Thought he. A luscious red her lips imbued,
'Tween which her sweet breath stole surmounting walls
Of pearl within; and from her eyes there beamed
Such fascinating looks no mortal man
Seemed worthy to respond unto their gaze.
Beauty and Love, full-bloomed and wed in bliss,
Seemed honeymooning in her happy face.

As a crazed youth beside some crystal spring,
Gazing into the sky mirrored below,
An angel's face thinks he beholds therein
And fears to move lest she away should fly,
So on the Maid Legion enraptured gazed,
Half fearing he might in a dream be bound,
And she a vision born of ecstasy:
Her perfect beauty so did fascinate.

In all the wide, wide sea no sweeter isle,
In all the wide, wide world no happier pair.
The love that flows to each from lovers' hearts
Returns again with sweeter flavors mixed,
As ocean currents that to southward flow
Ever return, all warm and redolent.

All hand in hand beside the washing waves
The lovers strolled. With cool deliciousness
Their brows the sea-breeze bathed. The Maiden's curls
The zephyrs fondled with all lovingly.
Their mouths they oped and laughing drank the breeze.
Each flower in sight he gathered for her hand.
Nothing they saw but what brought happiness.
Nought heard their ears but what with music teemed.
The skies above seemed never half so bright,
The world below seemed never half so good.
Green was the sea, and white the scattering spray,
Like pearls dashed o'er a flood of emerald.
Like flitting flakes of snow gleamed tiny gulls
Amid the whirling winds; and troops of mist
Sped like white hounds across the azure sky.

C A N T O 4.

The Maid's Dream of Paradise.

Beneath a linden tree their steps they stayed,
And made a bench-like rock their resting place.

"Now, darling, tell me all your dream," he said.
" 'Twas very long," she answered him; "but, oh,
The most celestial ever mortal dreamed.
'Twas all of love, and Paradise — and you."
His seat he left, and sat upon the sand
Close to her feet, where he her face might see,—
And took her hand. "First, music did I hear —
Far off, where shone a vision glorious,
And lo, in blessed Paradise I was.

"Then to my soul there came a sense of peace,
A peace that sponged away thoughts of the past,
And left my spirit clean and satisfied.
Oblivion sweet did all my senses soothe;
Afloat I seemed high in the upper skies;
All spaces widened out, all bounds enlarged;
All distances increased infinitely;
All objects visible faded from view;
All thoughts and feelings wholly ceased to be;
One endless ocean of non-entity
Was all in all — save only me,— and soon
In utter nothingness I was absorbed:
Then empty was the boundless universe,
And nought was anywhere — save only sleep.

"How long I rested thus I cannot tell;
But dreamily my life at last returned.
In ecstasy my raptured spirit lay;
Nor thought, nor wish, nor will I seemed to have.
In one vast ocean of celestial bliss
My soul from center to circumference,
By gentle waves was laved. Some darling thing
Seemed pillowed on my breast, and in my arms.
My name I heard it call, with words of love,
My eyes I oped — 'twas you. Above the heights
Of pure beatitude I seemed to float,
You by my side, I resting on your arm,
My hand in yours, my brow against your face.
Along the sky a pulsing music thrilled

In chorus with the throbbings of my heart,
To clouds of golden hue then did we change,
And into one our bodies seemed to melt,
As morning bright melts in a brighter noon.
Greatly perplexed a while was I to know
Whether I'd changed to you or you to me."

Here Legion laughed, and fondly kissed her hand,
Vowing how 'twas he hardly knew himself:
Whereat his face she gently slapped, and said:
"Oh, laugh not so, 'twas all so heavenly.
Our very souls did mingle in that cloud
Like notes of music in a melody.
Divided in four parts then each did seem,
Our various parts dancing in a quadrille,
Each part of me partner to part of you,
The music lively and our movements fast:
So, fourfold was my sum of ecstasy."

"Again laughed he most gleefully, and said:
"I thought us two our marriage one would make
But by your dream marriage would make us eight."
Then seeing hurt she felt her hand he kissed,
And praised her dream and her delivery,
Vowing he'd listen well if she'd tell all.
"What happened when the dance did end," she said,
"I can't recall, for in a bliss supreme
All bound I was, happy without a thought.
Long time I seemed entranced: move I could not,
Nor see, nor hear, nor think, but only feel,—
Like to a child upon the perfumed breast
Of sweet obliviousness dozing to sleep.

"Into my ears low notes of music stole
Against my face the balmy zephyrs pressed
Their cooling cheeks. Then crept into my eyes
Fine threads of light; and floating through my soul
Like clouds of gold upon a summer's eve
In western skies, came thoughts of Paradise.
Stronger I grew. Æolian whispers fell

Fainting within the portals of my ears,
And happy laughers echoed through my brain.
Ethereal forms, in lily robes arrayed,
Like fairies more than angels, gaily danced
Upon a stage of many rainbows made,
That slowly through the sky floated away,
Beyond the mountain tops, where came to view
A vale with flowers and rivulets all filled.

"There wandered golden bees innumerable.
Bright butterflies and jeweled honey-birds
Of rainbow tints; and many beauteous beasts.
With gentle eyes, and mouth ne'er stained with blood;
Giraffes and fallow deer, greyhounds and pards,
Zebras, gazelles, ponies, poodles and lambs;
Squirrels, ermines, chipmonks and guinea-pigs.
And birds all tame and very beautiful,
Canaries, doves, pheasants and orioles,
Peacocks, pigeons, finches, larks and jays,
Birds red and green and blue, speckled and white:
And happiness and peace were everywhere.
Bright o'er this vale did shine a hundred suns,
Both full and crescent moons, and silvery stars:
None ever rose or set, but circled round
And round eternally. So pure the air
These various suns showed every hill and dale,
Plain, grove, sea, isle, river and rivulet,
As in a mirror-globe, or bubble bright.

"This vale of joy down to an ocean reached,
Whose waves were liquid pearl, and music made;
Unnumbered isles gleamed on its shining tides,
Like clouds of gold above a setting sun,
The roving children of the sea and sky:
Among these isles shone happy Redenfayn,
And gaily o'er it sailed a white sea-dove.

"Methought my sight pierced through the ocean's deeps,
And 'neath the waves the rarest plants I saw,
Strange mosses, corals, sponges, shells and pearls,

Sands luminous, and gems of every hue,
Great rocks all filled with silver, tin and gold,
And beauteous fish bright flashing everywhere.

"When from this scene my eyes I slowly raised,
A spectacle sublime spread far and wide:
Mountains and hills, valleys, rivers and plains,
Green groves uplifting high their bird-bright boughs,
Cascades and lakes, founts, grottoes, nooks and bowers,
And all that lovely is to human sight."

"Saw you no angels there?" Legion inquired.

"Millions on millions did they seem to me,
As though all Heaven had been emptied there.
Each vale bloomed with their smiles; each hill rejoiced
Beneath their tender tread. They wandered 'mong
The rocks and labyrinths, sat in the groves,
And to the isles across the waters roamed,
On golden clouds some rode to distant orbs,
On rainbow ladders some to Heaven climbed,
Their shining wings some spread and flew afar,
As though for very joy of exercise.

Angels on harps of gold with silver strings
Played as in ecstasies, dancing around
The crystal fount of life, singing the while,
With merry laughters for their choruses,—
Their very souls with thrills of rapture filled.
A bliss divine seemed shed in showers there,
Like crystal rain through sunshine glittering,
And on my spirit fell the precious drops,—
Music and perfumes, lights, colors and joys,
Inmixed ineffably with other sweets,
Till in beatitude I was immersed,
And wished no other thing, no other where.

"At last there came an angel passing fair,
And gave me leave that land to make my home.
Just as my mouth I oped to say him 'yes,'
Of you I thought,—and oh, so shocked was I
To think how near to losing you I'd come,

That I awoke, all glad that I was here,
Content on earth ever to live — with you."

"Angelic dream!" he cried; "and sweetly told."
Downward she bent, and kissed his upturned lips,
The which to her was more than Paradise.

"But more, dear Legion, have I yet to tell:
My sleep returned, and time all infinite
Did seem to pass. Where I in being was,
And in what form, in spirit or in flesh,
I cannot tell: I seemed of nought but mind:
But you were with me — that was quite enough.
A curtain wide I saw of rainbows made,
Hanging from heaven's center to the earth;
But soon from the horizon up it rolled
Showing afar a bright cerulean sea,
Over whose surface gentle breezes rolled
A million wavelets that faint music made.
Then from the heavens to this sapphire sea
Came down a city jeweled like a bride;
And wide it spread and spread until its walls
Encompassed land and sea; and bright within
Myriads of angels, winged like butterflies,
Flew to and fro, or curveted on high.

"Then o'er them all arose, on flaming wings,
A giant grand of strength and beauty formed,
And of proportions so symmetrical
That every movement sweetest music made.
Michael it was, great generalissimo
Of all God's forces, powers and agencies.
A sword he drew and swung it 'round the sky,
Leaving great rainbows glittering in its tracks;
Then to his mouth a golden trump he placed,
And blew a blast that filled the universe
As sunshine fills a cloudless sky at noon.

"It was the trumpet of the Judgment Day,
And all the dead it summoned to appear.

Forthwith, from every quarter of the earth,
From every mountain, valley, plain and shore,
From every ocean, river, lake and sea,
Like shining vapors on a summer morn
Thronged upward, as in flowing robes of white,
The spirits of the dead, in numbers numberless.



The Queen of the Saints.

“High was the Judgment set, and open wide the Book.
By wonder so bewildered was my mind
All that I saw and heard I cannot tell;
But holy Mary, mother of the Christ,
Was Queen of Saints in greatest glory crowned,

Amid the halleluiahs of the host.
There was my angel mother, there was yours,
And there your mighty sire, Legion the Great,
Rejoicing all that in the Book of Life
Their names were writ: whereat my ecstasy
So ravishing no more can I recall,
My heart and soul supremely satisfied —
And in your loving arms I still did rest."

"Sweetest of all," cried Legion, shedding tears;
At thought of his dear mother and his sire
Up with the saints in bliss forevermore.

And then again they kissed, she, too, in tears;
Nor e'er did angels, thrilled with ecstasy,
O'er Zion's shining heights locking their wings
And arms, give kiss more pure or holier.

While talking low they were of other days,
She telling of her love when first they met,
How she of him that fateful morn had dreamed,
How in a song she'd called him from the sea;
In turn, he telling of his star-born maid,
And how her face the perfect semblance was
Of Margie's own, softly the white sea-dove
Cooed overhead: then revelation came
To each that for each other they were made,
And by some power divine together brought,
Solving the riddle of his strange career,
Responding to the yearnings of her soul.
And righting all the wrongs to Strombold done.

CANTO 5.

The Mountains of Supreme Content.

Near to the borders of this Vale of Joy
High loom the Mountains of Supreme Content,
Above all mirages, rainbows and mists,
But bathed in air of balm 'neath sky of blue,

With climate sweet in its salubrity.

There dwell those souls so philosophical
That nought disturbs their equanimity,
But one supreme content is ever theirs.
They look indifferent on the lands below;
Upon the distant seas they gaze afar
With no desire upon their waves to sail;
They hear sweet music in the Vale of Joy,
But unto them it means mere revelry,
Sure to be paid for with the coin of grief;
Of wars they read, ambitions, crowns, and fame,
As others read of devils, fiends, and ghosts,
And wonder why men's hearts go so astray;
Rumors they hear of riches, fashions, pride,
But comprehend not their significance.

Of envy, hatred, fraud and avarice,
They have no thought, nor words that signify.
Gold, silver, precious stones, they tread upon,
As other men elsewhere on gravel tread.
To them labor is sweet and full of joy,
Which ere they tire they cease, so need no rest.
Enough there is for each—no more, no less;
Unknown surplusses and deficiencies,—
Ever content with what their God doth give,
And seeking not the unattainable.

In trade a fair exchange is all they ask;
Love, confidence, truth and fidelity,
Abide forever in their thoughts and deeds.
For them Hell hath no dread—so far it seems;
And Heaven so sure their fate in nature's course
'Tis no more longed for than to-morrow's sun.
Death hath no terrors, and no grief it brings:
As unto sleep her babe the mother sings,
Thinking with joy how sweet and good its rest,
How bright and happy its awakening,
When next morn's light breaks in the golden east,

So in their graves they lay their happy dead
In confidence they'll see a happier morn.
Existence is to them supreme delight
That hath no end in this world nor the next,
And this the Hymn their souls do ever sing:

The Hymn to Life.

- "Oh, what an ecstasy it is to be!
Life, what an exquisite felicity!
All that we know of bliss is wrapped in thee:
Existence of itself one jubilee.
- "The sky unclouded, and the air blood-warm,
No wish for profit, and no fear of harm,
Our every organ, muscle, nerve and thought,
So geared in health we conscious are of nought
- "But one supreme divine serenity,
Such as archangels feel at rest on high,
Or saints redeemed when, gone their misery,
On rainbow wings they soar into the sky.
- "In living is summed up all happiness;
One's little toils and items of distress,
Earth's conflicts, duties and perplexities,
Serve but to emphasize our pleasantries,
As discords do our highest harmonies.
- "Borne like a gossamer upon the air,
Wrapped in the downy arms of spirits fair,
Feeling and thinking nought particular,
Our dreams budding with most congenial moods,
Which blossom forth in rare beatitudes,
- "Our souls seem in the heavens high to float
As though the crescent moon our private boat;
Near unto Paradise our spirit is,
With nought to mar our equanimities,
With everything to comfort and to bless,
Earth and its beauties one sweet consciousness.
- "The rush and roar of busy city throngs,
The sounds of whistles, bugles, bells and gongs,
Merely arouse some dreamy wonderments
Of why and wherefore thus, whither and whence,
As do great flocks of birds, or hordes of ants.

"Divine the bliss in the sweet fount of life:
Ignore all selfishness which breedeth strife,
And thanking God for life, just as it is,
Feel in their fulness its felicities."

Margie and Legion deep within their souls
This Hymn to Life enraptured seemed to hear;
And on their brows felt blow the zephyrs sweet
From the high Mountains of Supreme Content;
And opening wide each door and avenue
Into their hearts with ecstasies absorbed
Their influences and beatitudes,—
The while the white sea-dove did sweetly coo.
The Hymn to Life the Scribe did much perplex,
And forced his mind on matters deep to think.
Some how, some whence, an inspiration came
And touched his soul that he the truth might know.
Deep in his ears these words he seemed to hear:

The Eternal and the Temporal.

"The things we see are temporal, and change;
But things not seen eternal are, and range
In ceaseless vigor and unending youth
Throughout the universe—like changeless truth.

"Matter (or substance,) are the things we see,
But force and mind avoid our scrutiny.
Of matter, force and mind are things composed,
Some how in mystic bonds of love enclosed;—

"Grass, trees and insects, birds and beasts and men,
Bubbles and planets, the motes and suns we ken.
Like force and matter mind is everywhere,
In every form of life in earth or air.

"Working through brains and nerves, fluids and cells,
Each act of life mind orders and compels.
In men, beasts, birds, in fish, insects and shells.
By death discharged mind straightway doth repair
Unto its general range,—till called elsewhere.

"Life never dies, but through all time doth roam:
What we call death is mind and force from home.
Bodies dissolve, and go to whence they come;
But substance, mind and force defy the tomb."

CHAPTER XIX.

Legion at Redenfayn.

PROEM.

Legion explains to the Maid the secret of his departure from the island, and apologizes to Strombold therefor who fully exonerates him, realizing how ambitious youths of noble lineage long for adventures and for deeds of war. Jux, Strombold's serf, now appears on the scene, and comes near having a deadly combat with Legion. The Maid has not the heart to revisit her watch-seat on the cliff, so much had she suffered there. The King sends a ship to Redenfayn to take them all to their respective homes, and they all embark thereon, the Maid musing her farewell to the isle of her sorrow and her love, grieving to see it fade from view as the good ship sailed away.

CANTO 1.

Legion's Explanation of his Departure.

Oh, Isle of Redenfayn, abode of bliss,
Epitome of Paradise art thou!
Where Love hath for a season made her home,
The light of joy shedding in every heart,
Awakening music's thrills in every soul,
Spreading around the peace of blessedness,
And making life an ecstasy divine,

Where nought exists but pure felicity.
In love's fair hand is found the golden key
That opes to man the shining door of bliss,
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

How different now from those dark days of crime,
When pirates, smugglers and vile murderers,
Lived in thy caves, making of crime a trade,
Pillage their pastime, murder their delight,
Spending in drunken revelries their nights,
Cursing their King, defying Heaven's God,
And demonstrations making night and day
How like a demon man himself can make,
How like a hell the den he makes his home.

All womanlike the Maid could not conceive
How Legion loving her as he did say,
On her and love could so have turned his back;
And left her so alone to mourn his loss.
"I blame you not," said he; "for even I
Can now myself hardly such act explain.
I loved you with a love surpassing love,
A love that into exile drove me off
From your dear self, and made me seem a fiend,
While my poor heart as on a rack did writhe,
Self-martyred 'cause my love for you so pure.
Rather than do you wrong I would have died.
So strong I feared our loves would soon become
That if I dallied I its slave would be;
Or if I 'scaped the greater still your grief,
So to ambition I was forced to turn,—
The only passion that can master love.
"Could I have married you by law and Church,
From you away I never would have turned,
And how could we have mated otherwise?
Your father doomed right here his life to spend,
You in your heart all pledged with him to stay,
What would have been for me but stay here, too,
Upon so small an isle? and I a Legion born.

Suppose, (I'm speaking plain,) by love betrayed,
Some day a child between us had been born.
All bastardized by law, and by the Church,—
What then? Here come your father's enemies.
Arrested are we and by law condemned;
Both you and I in prison walls confined,
And your fair limbs in public stocks exposed,
Your father left to die in shame alone,—
And I the most to blame! Such horrid thoughts
Filled me with agony. From you and love
Fled I away, from shame to save us both.
To leave you was like leaving Paradise,
But while I stayed I felt Hell drawing near.
The Church I honor and the law I fear:
So by my angel mother was I taught.
Hence best it seemed that I away should go."

Then told he of the stranded boat he found,
And how it seemed just sent to take him hence.
"I loved you so of it I dared not tell,
For fear my love when added unto yours
Would start a flame that neither could control;
If then I left that grief your heart would break,
Or craze your brain: I've read of such in books.
Respect and love for you, respect for self,
My mother's memory, and the holy Church,
The fear of God, the dread of human law,
Pride in my name, which stain had never known,—
All these combined to force me from your side
Before by word or act too far I'd gone.
Grief I could stand, dishonor never could.
A Legion's heart dishonor cannot hold:
Should it once enter quick that heart would break.
Two paths before me stretched, both thick with thorns;
One downward led to pleasure and disgrace,
One upward led to grief, perhaps to fame:
This one I chose. The Legions so are made
To see what's right and do it are the same.

"Such were the reasons that controlled my course.
For guidance I unto my parents prayed,
And in my conscience felt that they approved.
In leaving I my duty did to you,
To your good Sire, my parents and myself.
Had I but known your noble father's name,
Or had a hint he was my father's friend,—
Oh, had I known of this what might have been?
But grieve I would not save for the distress
My conduct to your loving heart did cause;
For happy are we now, and who can tell
What otherwise our fortune might have been?
For human lives cannot be ciphered out
Like sums in algebra: too numerous
The unknown quantities:" *so read the Leaves.*

"Yes, Legion, satisfied I am," she said;
And while my reason may not grasp it all
Yet here you are, my lover dear and good,
And by your side all happy is my heart."
"When what's been done can never be undone,
Upon its corpse weep not. From sight and thought
Quick bury it, and forward move in hope,
Thankful to God," he added, with a kiss.

CANTO 2.

Legion's Apology to Strombold.

As seemed the Maid inquisitive to know
Why from the isle and her he'd sailed away
Legion surmised her Sire would like to know,
And so to him this explanation made:
"Your daughter, Sire, soon had I learned to love:
How could I help it, she so very kind,
Withal so very good, so beautiful,
And we both young, and disengaged our hearts?
The spell of an idolatry I felt
Deep in my heart working its subtle way,

And feared if here longer I should abide
My mind and will would be entranced away.
And I, a Legion, made a slave of love.

"She told me you were by the King exiled.
I, as became a Legion, dreamed of fame.
But how could I my King's good will expect,
And favor find in sight of friends at Court,
Should I for wife select an exile's child?
My lord, I'm talking frank as does become
Brave Legion's son, for, in a father's eyes,
Quite blamable my action may appear;
And so I pray my case may be reviewed
As at the time to me it did appear.
Your daughter here I truly deeply loved,
But I also did fame and honor love,
And which to choose my mind was much perplexed.
Having right here no friends to counsel with,
My mother's holy Sire's
In musings I did seek, and guidance asked,—
And God I prayed, out of the labyrinth,
To show the way. And so my vision cleared.
Before my eyes a Legion's duty loomed,
The voice of fame told where my father trod,
And how could I to him prove recreant?
(I had not then his dying words received.)
So I resolved this isle at once to leave,
And while my duty well remembering,
Forget a passion that did seem for me
Unwise, for her, perhaps, not fortunate.
But when such facts good father John disclosed
As showed my father's friend in arms you were
Who had him rescued on the battle-field,
And nursed until he died, who Margie was
Then first I knew; and then and there resolved
My best to do to have you all restored,
And in return beg Margie for my bride."
When Legion ceased the Sire his hand did grasp,
And with emotion thus his judgment gave:

"Good sir, most fully of all wrong you I
Acquit. Most high and noble your resolves,
Worthy of Legion's son; and to my child
All your deportment highly honorable."

Then 'round her father's neck her snowy arms
The Maiden threw, and warmly kissed his cheek,
And thanked him for his judgment generous.
With face enraptured she had Legion watched
While he his secret motives did reveal,
Some tears within her eyes, and on her lips
A tremor slight, betraying now and then
The secret workings of her gentle heart
When he her beauty or his love did tell;
And oft a struggle hard it cost her tongue
To stay its words while he so nobly told
The conflict in his heart that raged between
His love for her and duty to himself.

C A N T O 3.

Man's Development.

The Count, who Legion first admired, then loved,
Now honored, and his talk continued thus:
"I know how thoughts of war do stir the hearts
And thrill the souls of youths of noble blood.
The trumpet's brazen blare, the beat of drum;
The banner grand waving high in the air;
The knights in shining armor all equipped,
Mounted on prancing steeds, caparisoned;
The sight of hostile squadrons in array,
Couriers dashing swiftly to and fro,
The cry to charge the foe, the onward rush,
The clash of arms, the thousand battle cries,
The shout of victory and the fleeing foe,
Deliriums of wild delight create
Within the valiant breasts of noble youths.

"These thrills I've felt, the battle shocks I've stood,
As did become one of Varangian blood.
In armor clad and mounted on war steed
I've weapons crossed with adversaries fierce;
Wounds I've received and death I've given back
In pay therefor; in victory I've rejoiced—"
His eyes here Strombold dropped, and lowered his voice;
"Yes, and the battle o'er, like woman wept
Have I upon some brave friend's bloody corpse,
Or borne him dying from the fatal field.



Man a Beast of War.

"Oh, man's a beast of war, and on his prey
A thousand bloody centuries has lived.
In forests fighting savage animals,
With dogs for allies and with clubs for swords.

"But not so once. At first, the torrid zone
His home, the child of gentle peace was he,
His sole support the fruits of mother earth,
The flesh of birds and beasts by him abhorred.

But forced at last in colder climes to dwell,
The need of fleshly food he felt his blood
To heat, and skins of beasts his frame to warm.
The use of flesh for food habit became
Till nothing else for men was deemed fit food.
And so from fighting beasts our fellow men
We learned to fight, and loving beasts to kill
The lives of hostile men we learned to take.

"This tiger-like heredity I've felt
Surge like a bloody demon in my soul.
Out from the Norse-land sailed Leif Ericson,
My great ancestor, who in regions west,
Beyond the seas of darkness, storms and ice,
Sometimes Atlantic called, a New World found
Peopled by hairless beasts in shape of men,
Who fought like devils, and cared not for death.
My tribe was foremost when, on England's coasts
And up French rivers swarmed Varangian hosts,
Sweeping the land afar with fire and sword,
And doing deeds of intrepidity
The like whereto the world had never seen.
And it a legend is among the Norse,
That the last hero by Valkyrie borne
Unto Valhalla's halls my grandsire was,—
In glory slain 'mong heaps himself had slain.

"When we gave up old Odin for the Christ,
And learned that Christ's birth-place, his home and grave,
Were in possession of vile infidels,
Who Christians treated worse than we treat dogs,
We crusades started to redeem the land,
Myself fighting against the Paynim hosts,
Around the ramparts of Jerusalem;
Upholding there the banner of the Cross.

"But 'round the circle we are moving on,
Sweet peace will triumph yet o'er bloody war,
The eagle's place upon our flags the dove
Will take, Christ's gospel be our only guide,

And all mankind one brotherhood again.
As centuries it took to make us beasts
So long 'twill take to make us men again.
But that grand day some time will surely come,
And men will wonder how wars e'er could be."
"Oh, father, you're so noble, wise and good!"
Admiring him the Maiden softly said.

CANTO 4.

Jux, the Serf.

Beneath the cave a small arm of the sea
Ran to a lower room where skiffs their freight
Might land in secret and security.
Upon the shore beside this orifice
Stood Legion, wondering at nature's art.
"Surely, if architect these smugglers had
No better plan could well have been devised
Pursuit to dodge or plunder to conceal."
While thus he thought a man in serf's attire
Paddled a boat towards this orifice.
"Who art thou, man? and whence? what doing here?"
Demanded Legion, in much wonderment.
No answer made the man, but raised his oar,
And gestured threateningly. Legion perplexed
Stood motionless awhile; then called again
Upon the man to answer him, and give
Some history of himself, and what his aim.
His boat he turned and pushed toward the shore,
And gestures made as though he would assault.
The warrior blood in Legion was aroused;
But weapons he had none, and no defence.
A rock he seized, and motioned as to throw,
When on the scene laughing the Maid appeared.
"Oh, Legion, that's but Jux, our good old serf,
And marketer: I'm sure no harm he means."
Jux quickly dropped the oar; out bulged his eyes,

And on his face a look of wonderment.
"This man, Jux, you don't know," the Maiden said.
"Your cousin, or some friend," was his reply.
"A friend," she answered; "friend to all of us.
A pardon from the King he's brought us all,
And father's Count again, and has got back
His titles and estates and everything,
And we to Gishborn Fief will soon return.
Then, my good Jux, we'll make you man at large,
With house and farm and cattle of your own;—
Wont we, Legion dear?" "Certainly," he said;
"Whate'er you promise we'll be glad to do."
Then on the shore stepped Jux, and kneeling kissed
Fair Margie's hand, and wept in gratitude,
In his emotion quite bereft of speech.
"This friend's hand kiss, your lord he is and mine,"
Said she with merry smile; and on his knees
Jux homage did to Legion as his lord.
"His lady, you?" Jux had regained his voice.
She blushed, and downward cast her happy eyes.
"Soon will be, Jux," Legion for her replied,
And round her waist he placed his loving arm;
Whereat she looked at Jux with merry laugh,
And he clapped loud his hands, and wished them joy.

This serf, who was both cook and marketer,
Devoted to his master and the maid,
Supposed, at first, Legion some smuggler was,
Or pirate chief, or somehow enemy
Unto his lord, and fired by fury aimed
To land and slay him while yet all alone.
Most fierce, no doubt, the combat would have been,
And Legion slain, perchance, had not the Maid
Arrived: thus twice she his deliverer.
And oh, the woe had Legion there been slain
By menial serf, his club a boatman's oar!
To Legion's race an end inglorious,
To Margie death, or life with broken heart,

To Strombold blow more dire than frown of King,
Alas, how short the step from glee to grief!

CANTO 5.

The Watch-seat on the Cliff.

Her strength the Maid regained: such medicine
Is love and joy to those of sorrow sick.

Up to that sacred cliff on which that night
So long they both had sat, and no word spoke,
The cliff on which so oft her seat she'd made,
And watched the sea, looking afar through tears,
Praying for him, and hoping his return,—
Up to that cliff they clambered hand in hand,
With happy hearts. But when the seat she saw
Her heart gave way from thoughts of joy and woe
Experienced there—joy for one little hour,
And woe, oh for so many dreadful months!
So turning back, in Legion's arms she fell
Convulsed. He, too, emotion strong did feel,
With some compunctions for the grief he'd caused.

Upon a shelving rock they half reclined.
"Weep not, dear love," he said, in soothing tones,
With tender touch of lips upon her brow;
"Never again we'll part; but by your side
My life I'll spend, all happy in your love."
Then looked she up: their lips in love did meet,
And eyes looked into eyes as soul sees soul.

"Remember you our sitting on this cliff?"
She asked. "Yes, love, I do, and ever will,"
He answered. "Full my heart then was of love,
And all my soul in silence worshiped you.
Speak dared I not lest too much I should say.
Touch you afraid I was lest I should blaze.

Yet did my spirit feel your love's caress,

And I in turn my love poured forth on you.
So on this cliff with pleasure great I look,
Both for the happiness I then did feel,
And for the joy your presence now does give."

"'Twas bliss indeed to me," softly she said,
"By your dear side to sit; yet how I longed
For your hand's loving touch, for just one word
Your love to show. And had your arms you placed
Around my form in love as now you do,
And kissed my lips, oh what a thrill of bliss
Unto my soul; for I did pine to know
Whether in truth your heart held me in love:
Yet still that hour here was Paradise.
But oh, my vigils here after you left,—
Day after day while months did slowly pass,
Straining my sight across the distant sea,
Hoping some sign to see of your return.
Those days to me were full of misery,
And horror 'tis their memory to recall—
So great the contrast with my present joy.
Spare, then, my heart the strain that seat suggests,
Yourself I have, and that is all I wish,
Your precious presence quite suffices me,
And your dear arms around me is pure bliss.
Ten million times, my loved one, I'm repaid
For all I've suffered since you said 'farewell'.
And then they kissed: beatitude was there.

The white sea-dove cooed softly overhead.

CANTO 6.

The happy Departure from Redenfayn.

To Redenfayn the King a ship did send,
With father John on board, unto their homes
To bring Strombold the Count, his daughter fair,
Legion if there, and all their household goods.

How grand the spectacle that coming ship!
Her many sails all spread unto the winds,
And from its masthead streaming long its flag:
No pirate's craft, no smuggler's dingy hulk,
The laws of God and King to violate,
And Redenfayn again stain with their crimes;
But messenger of honor, peace and love,
Coming the little isle to fill with joy.
The ship's mission at once Legion explained:
"The King declared Strombold in greatest state
Should to his home return, that all might know
The badge of royal favor he did wear.
He wanted me to wait and take the ship,
But wait I could not for I feared delay
Might give misfortune chance to work some ill.
Besides as in a little boat I left
So in a little boat would I return."

Her lover's hand the Maid did take and kiss
To show how much she did appreciate
His motive and his act in coming soon.
Oh, what a sight, how thrilling and sublime,
The meeting 'twixt Strombold and father John.
Into each other's arms with shouts of joy
They rushed like man and wife long torn apart.
They kissed, they hugged, they cried as women do
Whose hearts with sudden joy are over full.
And each so did the other all absorb
The ship's good mission they did quite forget,
Until the captain spoke and action urged.
Then turning, father John did Legion greet
With warm embrace, kind words and holy kiss,
Lastly, with great respect the Maiden's hand
He took, hoped she was well and blessing gave.
So great her beauty and her dignity
Good father John was awed to reverence.

What a romance of joy did hedge them 'round!
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

But hurry did the captain oft require.
To put on board their goods and furniture
A busy day it was at Redenfayn
With Strombold and the Maid: neither quite knew
What they away should take, what leave behind.
Legion did Margie help, and father John
The Count: and helping hands the ship's crew lent.
Still high the sun when all at last on board
Homeward the good ship turned and sailed away.
As up the anchor came, and wide her sails
The royal ship spread to the favoring breeze,
Margie with moist eyes set on Redenfayn,
That dear isle saw fast fade beyond her view,
And in her heart this farewell song she sung:

The Maid's Farewell to Redenfayn.

"Farewell, sweet island Redenfayn,
My fondest love I leave with thee.
Some happy day I'll come again,
And bring my lover back with me.

"Oh, Redenfayn, where'er I be,
However great my name and state,
Ever my heart will be with thee,
And for thee pray a happy fate.

"Oh, Redenfayn, thou'rt lost to sight:
Unto another world I roam;
But every place to me is bright
Where Legion is—for there's my home.

"Who saileth east will come again
As my dear Legion came to me;
So though I sail unto the main
My Redenfayn again I'll see.

"'Tis true upon thy rocks I've shed
Most bitter tears of deepest woe,
But he returned who once seemed dead,
And ne'er again from me will go.

"No fault of yours my lover left,
But he thy gift was from the sea;
And when of him I was bereft
Some how you charmed him back to me.

"While my dear Legion's hand I hold
I'll risk all fates that may betide,
Completely happy and consoled,
While his dear self is at my side.

"Then onward sail, oh royal ship,
To my new home that is the old;
Blessings I know attend the trip,
And joys and pleasures manifold."

* * * * *

To do the act that's right there's always time:
Not till we die dies opportunity;
With every breath is born another chance.
However red with crime, or black with sin,
While yet on earth he lives no one's condemned
Beyond appeal: new trials get they all
Who pray the boon — and then some merits show.
A shameless coward he who dares not hope.
Despair strikes none who open keeps his eyes,
And looks for straighter roads and firmer ground.
Heaven honors him who tries, not him who wins.
Who in good faith the effort bravely makes
Does all that Heaven requires: in angels' eyes
Hero he is. Success from chance oft comes,—
And oft from effort made unworthily.
Who does his best, leaving results with God,
Does well,—does all angels themselves can do,—
No hero, saint nor martyr e'er did more,—
And in the Judgment Book his record's clear.
Great are the joys that true repentance brings,
When backed by courage and a firm resolve.
On the right road now Legion's feet were set,
Fame based on selfish acts, or deeds of war,
Now he abhorred; and opportunity,
Once used himself alone to glorify,
Devoted now to peace and charity.
Blessed is he who opportunity
Doth gladly use to help his fellow man!

CHAPTER XX.

The Joyful Consummation.

PROEM.

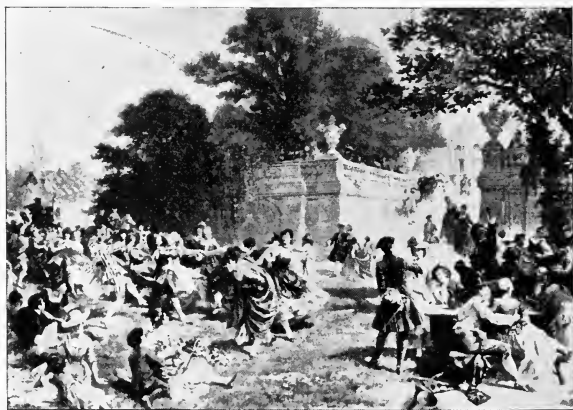
On a bright day in merry May, at Shonbirg Hall, in presence of their friends, Legion and Margaret are married, father John officiating. The King's commissioner then read a royal proclamation announcing Strombold's restitution, gazetting Margaret as Countess of Redenfayn, and dubbing Legion Knight of Shonbirg Hall. At the same time, in the Queen's name, he presented Margaret with a locket and neck-chain of gold. The village youths sing the Song of Love, and all was joy and merriment. On invitation, Legion and his bride, along with Strombold attend the Court, where Margaret has her youthful recollections of royalty refreshed, to her exquisite delight. There Legion received the accolade; and a hag announced that the curse had been removed from Legion's lineage by the marriage. Shonbirg Hall and grounds are repaired and beautified into a little Paradise, and there live the lovers, Count Strombold the Sire, good father John, and Jux now free, all happy, Margie the joy of everyone, herself supremely blest in Legion's love.

CANTO 1.

Marriage of Legion and the Maid.

In Shonbirg Hall, a day in merry May,
There was convened a happy company:

Strombold the Sire, good Count of Gishborn Fief,
Wearing his sword and badges of renown,—
Margie, his daughter fair of Redenfayn,—
Legion the brave, landlord of Shonbirg Hall,—
Jux, once a serf now free and fairly rich,—
Good father John, the holy priest of God.
Who had both Legions nursed, father and son,
Serving with Strombold in the hospital,—
Lords of the land, ladies of high degree,
Neighbors and tenants, all on pleasure bent:



A Merry Day at Shonbirg Hall.

Present, also, the King's commissioner,
With herald, and a royal retinue.

"Who gives away Margaret of Redenfayn
In holy matrimony?" asked the priest,
Good father John, as she and Legion stood
Before the altar. "I," Strombold replied,
"To Legion here, son of my dearest friend,
In love I give her." Then Legion her hand
Did gently take, and on her finger placed

A ring of purest gold, vowing to love
And cherish her as his dear wedded wife,—
Forever. And Margaret to Legion gave
Her troth, and vowed his wedded wife to be,—
Till death. Upon their heads the priest his hands
Did place, and man and wife did them pronounce,
Invoking God's best blessings on their lives,
And wishing them unending happiness.
Then 'round her husband's neck the bride her arms
Did throw, and kissed his lips in ecstasy,
Such was the transport of her love and joy,—
While tears of tender sympathy did shine
In eyes of gentle ladies looking on.

Hers was the acme of felicity,
Her dreams of happiness all realized,
Her brightest hopes fulfilled, forever gone
Her fears: she and her lover ever one,
Wedded in love and law by holy Church.
Three mighty blasts the herald now did blow,
And stepping forth made proclamation thus:
"Hear ye, hear ye, the King's commissioner!
Let all attention give, and due respect!"

"Good people," said the King's commissioner,
"Deputed am I by our gracious King
To stand for him on this most happy day."
A parchment with the King's own royal seal
He read, revoking all the orders made
To seize Count Strombold's honors and estates,
Restoring all his titles, serfs and lands,
Repayment ordering of all back rents,
And making him a Counsellor to the King.
Margaret his daughter, now brave Legion's bride,
Gazetted was Countess of Redenfayn,
The island made a part of her domain;
For valiant deeds and honor ever bright,
Legion himself dubbed Knight of Shonbirg Hall:
All three by their most Royal Majesties

Their next reception summoned to the Court
Where Legion would the accolade receive.
Then for a wedding present from the Queen
And in her name the King's commissioner
To Countess Margaret gave a chain of gold,
Pendent thereto a heart-shaped locket set
With precious pearls circling a diamond bright.

Again his trumpet thrice the herald blew.
"Long live their Royal Majesties!" he cried:
"Long live Count Strombold, Counsellor to the King!
Long live Sir Legion, Knight of Shonbirg Hall,
Margaret his bride, Countess of Redenfayn,
And all here present loyal to the King!"
With loud applause and faces of delight
The happy crowd without dissent approved
The noble actions of their Majesties.

Then sung the village youths this song of love,
With happy smiles, music and lively dance,
To every one's delight,—Margie's the most:

The Song of Love.

"The fairest flowers for lovers sigh,
Waiting their message sweet,
Which comes by bee or butterfly
And makes their lives complete.

"So maids when love begins to brew,
Their hearts with passion stirred,
Their lips all moist with honey-dew
Long for a lover's word.

"As every river loves the sea,
Each morn the day-god's face,
As shore and sea kiss ceaselessly,
And ceaselessly embrace,

"As earth to spring's caress responds,
The ocean to the moon's,
So maidens yield to bridal bonds
When true love importunes."

Strombold the mighty Count, Legion the Knight,
Margie the Countess fair and happy bride,
Good father John, and Jux, once serf now free,
Were names in everybody's mouth and heart,
All wishing them all joy and happiness.

And overhead cooed soft the white sea-dove.

Never did fairer happier bride receive
From happier bridegroom a more loving kiss
Than sweet Margie from Legion on that day.
If e'er on earth perfect has true love been,
Love only of the heart and mind and soul,
With no admixture of the animal,
Their's was the instance and the evidence.
If ever soul did coalesce with soul
In unison complete and infinite
Those blending souls were their's. As Holy Writ
Of man and wife doth say, "they twain one flesh
Shall be," so here these twain one soul became.

Great was the joy that day at Shonbirg Hall.
Tables were spread for all, with viands filled,
And drinks that fun provoked not foolishness;
Games for the young, and many merry sports;
Seats in the shade for talks and lookers-on.
O'er all the grounds were heard the jolly laugh,
The notes of music and the happy song.
The bride and groom, and Count, were everywhere
Seeing that all were served, and equal chance
Did have for feasting and for merriment:
And all agreed that on a fairer bride
And braver groom no sun had ever shone.

CANTO 2.

The Honeymoon.

Sing all ye tuneful birds, coo all ye doves;
Bloom all ye flowers, your fragrance all pour forth;

Be glad all gentle beasts that ladies love;
Be happy all as Legion and his bride.
Ye planets, brighter in your orbits shine;
Ye stars, new glories put into your beams;
Oh, moon, take all the sadness off thy face;
Oh, sun, make all thy seasons like to May;
Oh, Heaven, ope your doors and bend down low;
Oh, angels, make your visits oft and long;
Oh, God, make earth more like what Eden was:
In bliss at last are Legion and his bride,
And sung his heart epithalamium.

Epithalamium.

I.

"Love, oh Love, rules all the world,
Rules man and beast and bird;
Heaven and earth have both impearled
Within their hearts this word
Bring down then, Hymen, bring
Love's own elysium;
Sing then, ye Seraphs, sing
Epithalamium.

II.

"Lightly bends the amorous breeze
To kiss the dimpled wave,
Fondly bounds the loving seas
The zephyr's cheek to lave,
Gaily leaps the bright gazelle
Beside his sweet-eyed mate,
Whispering of a grassy dell
Where love has conquered hate.

III.

"Sweetly woos the white sea-dove
With words and honied kiss,
Sweetly yields his gentle love
To thoughts of wedded bliss.
Angels love in Paradise,
The stream of life beside,
Off'ring hearts a sacrifice
To win an angel bride.

IV.

"Mortals bow to Cupid's sway
Both men and blushing maids,
Bound in love they sigh by day
For Hymen's nuptial shades.
Come then, darling, love's supreme
O'er land and sky and sea,
Marriage is nor sin nor dream,
But love's felicity."

Within his arms she was: her charms divine



A Marriage of Love.

The moon's chaste light revealed; her tender eyes
Her love poured forth upon his raptured face.

E'en like the white dove's breast her shining brow,
O'erhung in part by tiny straggling curls,
While other ringlets, fine and soft and bright,
Kneeled on her neck in homage of her check,
Or clustered well her snowy bosom 'round,
And slept in perfume there. As floats a cloud
Of sunny gold above the evening star
So 'bove her eyes did float her brows serene.
Beauty and love, full bloomed and doubly wed,
Seemed honeymooning in her blissful face,
She all unconscious of her loveliness.

Sorrow is dead, and love and joy supreme.
The bride and bridegroom dwell in Paradise,
For Paradise is where the heart is glad.
Their woful past, and many griefs and tears,
Their present state more like a Heaven make.
The pendulum of hopes and fears doth rest,
Equation comes and equilibrium,
Nirvana's reached, and love is satisfied
Forevermore: *so read the Myrtle Leaves.*
Hand locked in hand, they rove along the streams,
Beside the lakes and o'er the flowery meads,
Or search the little vales and vine-clad grots.
Below the crystal waterfalls they sit,
The bright-winged birds they watch fly to and fro,
And listen to the songs of those that sing.
They ribbons bind upon their pet gazelle,
They chase in sport white rabbits o'er the lawn,
They feed the pheasants, pigeons and pet swans,
Their flowers they plant and tend, their vines they train,
They plan what on the morrow they will do,
And what next week, next month, perchance next year.
In little pleasures thus they pass the day,
Oblivious of time, so happy both.

All satisfied the white sea-dove o'er head.

And when at dark their joyful labors ceased,
This was the song her loving heart did trill:

The Bride's Lullaby.

"Come, rest thee darling, rest
Upon thy true love's breast,
Till care has fled,
Till pain is dead,
Come, rest thee darling, rest.

"Thy bride will guard thy sleep,
Thy bride will vigil keep,
Till opes thine eye,
Till ends thy sigh,
Thy bride will guard thy sleep.

"With my warm bosom's swell,
I'll rock thee soft and well,
Till thou hast smiled
Like mother's child,
I'll rock thee soft and well.

"Then rest thee darling, rest,
Upon thy true love's breast,
Till care has fled,
Till pain is dead,
Then rest thee darling, rest."

CANTO 3.

A Royal Reception.

At Court it was a day of splendid state.
To all the lords and ladies of the land
The King and Queen a grand reception gave.
In equipages fine hither they came
To do obeisance to their Majesties,
Attended by their showy retinues.

With brilliant lights the palace was ablaze,
All there the kingdom's pride and eminence,
Its loveliest ladies and its manliest men,
Arrayed in costumes gorgeous in their tints,
And in their texture fine as human skill.

Flowers and foliage filled the corridors,
While throbbed the air with music's sweetest strains.

Fashion was there with all its manners fine.
Its glittering gems and gorgeous draperies;
Pomp with its pageantry and arrogance,
Sweet modesty dressed in her simple robes
Of elegance, beauty with all her charms,
Surrounded by her love-lorn worshipers;
Heroes renowned with wreaths and dazzling stars,
Medals and crosses, ribbons and epaulettes;
Princes and dukes, lords, barons, counts and knights,
With shining swords, and rattling spurs of gold;—
While here and there poets and scientists,
Scholars and sculptors, artists and architects,
Had their admirers and their devotees;
Lastly the bankers and the millionaires,
The liveried ushers, flunkies and underlings,—
A throng various and interminable.

The silken tapestries, the statues rare,
The pictures on the walls in frames of gold,
The marble columns and their capitals,
The shining ceilings and the colored floors,
The works of art lovely and various,
The curios rich from India and the East,
The rarest gold fish in a crystal vase,
And mirrors large that duplicated all.

The gorgeous costumes of the King and Queen,
The splendid robes of those of royal blood,
The rustle of the silks of ladies grand,
The many colored lights, the music's swell,
The ceaseless hum of talk and merriment,
The lords and ladies moving to and fro,
Shining in costumes of magnificence,—
All made a scene well nigh too bright for earth,
Which once beheld never could be forgot.

Conspicuous in this grand and brilliant throng
Loomed noble Strombold, Count of Gishborn Fief,—
So great his height, so huge and straight his frame,
So long and gray his hair and flowing beard,

Wearing his sword and decorations all,
Famed and revered for his great deeds and worth.

Legion the brave and Margie his fair bride
The Count accompanied, beaming with joy,
Admired by all that glorious galaxy:
Legion gazetted Knight of Shonbing Hall,
And Margie fair Countess of Redenfayn.

The King and Queen with gracious courtesy
Received them all and wished them happiness,
And kindly bade them come again and oft.
The Queen so mild took Margie by the hand,
Declared her mother's face and form she had,—
Her beauty praised,—also her garniture.
“Legion,” said she, “most lovely is your bride,
And happy may you both forever be!”
Then ecstasy, in letters large and bright,
On Margie's beaming face her autograph
Wrote plain and beautiful: *so read the Leaves.*

Then three loud blasts a trumpeter did blow,
And proclamation made of knighthood's law.
The King his sword unsheathed,—a royal blade;
On one knee Legion knelt, with head bowed low.
Pale Margie turned, and smiled most dubiously,
Within her heart not sure what might be done.
The King with sternness raised his glittering blade,
As though a deadly blow to strike, but down
On Legion's back gently the stroke let fall.
“Arise, Sir Knight!” the King with smiles exclaimed.
Then blowed the trumpets and played all the bands,
While through the hall resounded loud applause.
When Legion rose on him a sword was girt,
And shining spurs: a Knight Sir Legion was:
At last his dream of glory all fulfilled.

The King's jester to all gave great delight,
The young and old, the foolish and the wise.
His bells and lute in every hall were heard.

"Our King," said he, "has power like a god:
Out of a pearl he has a countess made,
Fair as the blessed saint whose name she bears;
With his good sword a legion does he strike,
And lo, a Knight arises in its place,
But leaves the Legion greater than before.
Most marvellous of all: by words alone
All right side out and wrong side in he turns
A mighty man, a warrior brave and famed,
And proves him true in honor and in faith,
And gives to Gishborn Fief its rightful lord."

When thus the jester spoke all did applaud,
And loud the music in the chorus joined.

CANTO 4.

The Curse on Shonbirg Hall Removed.

Up rose a woman old, with locks of gray,
Her garb and features strange, and loud she cried:
"At last has gone from Shonbirg Hall the spell
Cast by that mother's curse at Willowdale:
A Legion's heart, pierced by a shaft of pearl,
Turns from the ways of war to paths of peace:
That shaft of pearl the love of Margaret,—
And she a woman of Varangian blood."
"Ha, ha!" the jester said; "'tis all so plain,
For Margaret, in French, doth mean a pearl;
And Margaret's love shaftlike hath pierced the heart
Of Legion brave, now in the path of peace.
So, gone's the curse that shadowed Shonbirg Hall.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms."

Again the company did loud applaud,
And loud the music in the chorus joined.

Whence came this hag and whither went none knew.
She was not, was, and is not; that was all

Any could say when questioned as to her.
And village gossips, (those most knowing ones,)
Do tell around that when the Church bell rung
Announcing Legion unto Margie wed,



The King's Jester.

A raven from the belfry flew in fright,
And all the cocks in Shonbirg crowed for joy.
While o'er the Hall a lovely rainbow shone,
And on its roof cooed loud a white sea-dove.
Charmed Margie was by what she saw and heard:

So like it was to what as child she saw
'Twas hard to tell which one a memory was,
Or whether one was real and one a dream,—
Such was her rapturous bewilderment.
How unlike aught upon her ocean isle!

When asked what ladies pleased her best at Court,
None could she specify, except the Queen,
So fascinated was she by the kind
And gracious manner of her Majesty.

When questioned 'bout the noble men she saw,
So wrapped up in her husband were her thoughts,
None but the King, the Count and her dear groom
Could she describe, or name, or specify—
"Except the jester!" said she with a laugh.
How bright a night that for her memory!
How like experience in a Paradise!
The sights of fashion and formality,
The sounds of music and festivity,
The scenes of beauty, wealth and witchery,
The tastes of sweetmeats, candies, cakes and wines,
The smells of ottars, balms and bergamots,
A youthful lady's heart thrill with delight,
And Margie's mind was lost in ecstasy.
And happy, too, was Count Strombold, the brave,
Thus vindicated, and thus glorified;
All gifts of fortune that were suitable
Upon him lavished in their plenitude;—
And as next morning through the Shonbirg parks
Alone he strolled, charmed with the air and sky,
The scenery and mystic influence,
And general joy, thus he philosophized:
"Oh, what a joy conscious existence is!
To feel the thrills of godlike intellect;
To gloat in triumph o'er the precious hoards
Stored in the treasure-house of memory;
To spread imagination's spirit wings,
(Plumed by Jehovah for the highest flights,)

And speed like lightning through the universe,—
Surveying earth and sky, and Heaven and Hell,
Then making new worlds and inhabitants;—
And not contented with its work by day
Ranging by night in dreams to fairy land,
And Paradise where angels have their haunts,
'Mid all that's good, and true, and beautiful.
Indeed, a bliss it is this life on earth;
And, though upon my stage a curtain dropped
Hiding my world of early life from view,
Yet, on the scenes of strife turning my back,
A new a brighter and a better world
Have I created with my books and thoughts,—
My child, all angel-like, consoling me,
Keeping love's flame alive within my heart.
Hence 'gainst my fate no harsh complaint I lodge,
But thankful am to God for all His gifts.

“And now new joys are budding on my life,
That blessed fruits of joy no doubt will bear;—
And thus my service to great Legion done,
Like fabled bread upon the waters cast,
Repaid in honor by his noble son,
My last days makes more happy than my first,—
Like new sun rising ere the old is set.
Peace like a crown from Heaven rests on my head,
And joy pure as a saint's dwells in my heart.
Honored I stand above my worth and works,
And vindicated 'gainst all enemies,—
My victory and triumph all complete,
The King, himself, my chiefest champion.
Thus every wrong justice at last doth right:
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.”

CANTO 5.

Shonbirg Hall and Redenfayn.

Than Shonbirg Hall there was in all the world
No happier place, no fairer shrine of love.

Such the effect of cocks crowing for joy,
Of white sea-dove on church roof cooing loud,
And raven's flight, upon the wedding day;
So great the force of fortune's many gifts
To Strombold, Legion, and Margie, the bride;
So powerful the story of the hag,
The breaking of the spell, the curse removed;
And such the joy and so much brightness there,
All scenes and sounds of weirdness ceased to be,
And Shonbirg Hall became the home of luck.

All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.

In all the earth never a happier pair
Than Legion, brave and good, and Margie fair.
Some new joy in their souls each hour dropped,
Some new cord wove each day to bind their hearts.

Their crowns of joy to make all brighter still,
Strombold the Count, the priest good father John,
And Jux the true, now free, in Shonbirg Hall
Did make their home,—one happy family,
In love, peace, plenty and prosperity.
The happiness that's centered all in self
The worm doth feel whose maw with mud is full,
The buzzard feels when crammed with carrion:
True happiness is that celestial joy
That thrills his heart who helps a fellow man.
Of doing good true pleasure is composed.

True fame did Legion find in doing good,
True happiness in helping fellow men,
True glory working in the paths of peace,
In healing hearts and not in making wounds,
In helping friends and not in slaying foes.

His sires were Legion called 'cause each a host
Was, all within himself, on fields of blood,
Where strength and valor spelled out victory;
But he was Legion called because a host
In works of charity and brotherhood.

In all the Kingdom through no names more loved
Than Legion's, honored Knight of Shonbirg Hall,
And Margie's Countess fair of Redenfayn.

Who sails to eastward some day will return.
Each year at Redenfayn a month they spend,
With ecstasy each scene revisiting
Where they did walk or sit when first they met—
Save one,—the watch-seat on the tear-stained cliff.
Back shrunk her heart from thoughts it did arouse,
Loth were her feet that upward path to tread,
So many bitter tears she'd shed thereon,
Watching for his return across the sea;
So many woful sighs there had she heaved,
Thinking, perhaps she'd never see him more.
Nor did he care again the place to seek
Where her he loved so long for him had grieved.

The locket that his saintly mother gave
He still did wear, fair Margie's hair within;
Her jewelled locket, given by the Queen,
Now filled with Legion's portrait and her own,
Upon her breast by day and night she wore:
Bright talismans of luck these lockets seemed,
Nor for an hour were ever laid aside:
So sacred seem the mysteries of love.

CANTO 6.

In Paradise.

Fair Shonbirg Hall, a shrine of beauty now,
Was their abode of bliss. By artists' hands
Its walls and halls all splendidly adorned;
Its gardens, walks and lawns made beautiful
With arbors, flowers, trees, sweet shrubs and vines;
And nought not done that wealth or skill could do
The Hall and grounds to make a Paradise.

And so all happy were their loves and lives:
No clouds cast shadows on their sunny paths,
No frosts the flowers nipped that grew around,
No chilling winds blew from the Land of Gloom,
No pains nor sorrows drove their joys away,
No discords marred the music of their hearts.

Such ever Margie's supreme graciousness,
So exquisite her beauty and her smile,
So ever soft and cheery her sweet voice,
So anxious always quick to do what pleased,
So prodigal of all that makes delight,
Nought could but perfect satisfaction live
Where she around exhaled felicity.

As through the air flowers their fragrance spread,
As through the heavens pours the sun his light,
As good news cheers a heart disconsolate,
As music thrills with ecstasy the ear,
As luscious food one's hunger satisfies,
As what one seeks gives pleasure when obtained,
So all of pleasure and delight to all
Was Margie, Countess fair of Redenfayn,—
Where'er she was the Queen of Blessedness.

So, ever Legion and his Margie seemed
Within the Vale of Joy to have their home,
Near Eden's gate, reached by its shine and songs,
And balmy airs, thrilled by its ecstasies.
Joy, like a tree of life, bears flowers and fruits
Ambrosial every mouth, that satisfy
But never satiate: its fruit their food.
As in a happy mother's tender arms,
Rocked by her bosom's swell, a happy babe
Doth rest, charmed by her loving lullabies,
So rested Margie in her Legion's love,
Her body, heart and soul all satisfied,—
No wish beyond, no thought of other thing.

Joy's farthest Thule had her spirit reached,
Nor other voyage did it long to make:
Bliss by her side with wings all folded stood.

Happy through life as on her wedding day.
The golden lamps of bliss burned ever bright
Within the temple of her loving soul.
Thus Margie and her Legion ever live:



At Home in Shonbirg Hall.

Within each soul an ocean of delight
Spread far and wide and deep its crystal floods,
E'er at full tide; and when some limpid wave
Of love's emotion extra high rolled on
The smooth wide shores of their receptive hearts,
Their natures rose upon the blissful flood
In ecstasy of joy unspeakable.

No storms upon this ocean ever blow,
No beast nor evil fish within it swims,
No birds of prey above it spread their wings,
But in its depths are all felicities:
There are the gardens of Hesperides,
And there the islands of Beatitude.
Above it smiles a sky divinely bright,
Beyond, but near, the gates of Paradise,
And Love's almighty arms hedge it around.

On earth her loving mission closed in bliss,
To Heaven that Guardian Angel winged her way,
Leaving on Legion's soul her farewell kiss,
On Margie's heart her blessings and her grace,
On earth two minds by perfect love made one:
Such was that Angel's love: *so read the Leaves*.
And this the farewell song she softly sung:

The Guardian Angel's Farewell.

"Could angels love as maidens love,
Could my heart burn with passion's flame,
Then would I quit the realms above
On Legion's soul to write my name.

"Though strong ambition in his heart
Inherited from lordly sires;
Though born to act a hero's part,
And in his veins fame's subtle fires;

"Yet never heart had stronger love,
And never soul had nobler thought,
Else never I, as white sea-dove,
Had in his soul repentance wrought.

"But though so sweet and pure and fond
All gladly I his love resign
To one, all other maids beyond,
Whose love for him is love divine.

"Love's perfect counterparts are they,
In thought and wish affinities;
Neither doth order nor obey
So perfect all their harmonies.

"But while to Heaven I wing my way,
On you, loved ones, my thoughts I'll keep;
Ever for your welfare I'll pray,
And sweet dreams send to bless your sleep.

"Farewell, farewell, sweethearts of mine,
Now wrapped up in each other's love;
If e'er in grief your hearts repine
O'er head will coo the white sea-dove."

* * * * *

Who more of Legion and his bride would know
Will welcome ever find at Shonbirg Hall,
Or Margie's ocean isle, fair Redenfayn,—
And every courtesy: *so says the Scribe*,
Who in due season wed with Yndafrêne.

Passed are all chasms—reached is Paradise;
And high o'erhead soft cooes the white sea-dove.
All evil charms the charm of love out-charms.



EPILOGUE.

I.

The chasms all forever passed,
Upon the Eden shores of bliss
Now rest fair Margie's feet at last
All safe from misery's abyss;
And every rapture known to love
Doth thrill her heart with ecstasy,
While joys like those of saints above
Her life fill with felicity.

II.

No thorns upon her pathway grow,
No clouds obscure her happy sky,
All flowers of gladness 'round her glow,
And nought of sorrow cometh nigh.
The Vale of Joy her spirit treads,
And feasts upon its many sweets;
Kind fortune 'round her pleasures spreads,
And every mishap quick defeats.

III.

Brave Legion in her arms she folds,
His soul to hers forever wed,
And nought else that the great world holds
Doth Margie languish for or need.
Compared with him all other golds
Are dregs of dirt or dross of lead;
And out of him her fancy molds
All that delights her heart or head.

IV.

As two bright rivers join in one
And flow forever on in peace,
So their two souls together grown
Live on as one without surcease.
Whatever clouds in other skies,
Whatever hates in other eyes,
Both love and sunshine ever reign
At Shonbirg Hall and Redenfayn;
And there, with nought of sacrifice,
Exists an earthly Paradise.

THE END.



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